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THE GREATNESS AND DECLINE OF ROME

VOL. I.

THE EMPIRE BUILDERS

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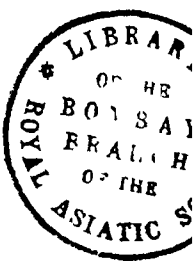

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THESE two volumes contain a history of the age of Cæsar, from the death of Sulla to the Ides of March. They cover the critical years in which Roman imperialism definitely asserted its sway over the civilised world—when, by the conversion of the Mediterranean into an Italian lake, Italy entered upon her historic task as intermediary between the Hellenised East and barbarous Europe.

Prefixed to the work are five introductory chapters giving a somewhat lengthy summary of Roman history down to the moment when the detailed narrative begins. Despite the many defects to which this style of writing is obviously exposed, I would beg my readers to study these chapters with patience and goodwill; for they are a necessary introduction to the full description and understanding of Cæsar's own age.

Human history, like all other phenomena of life and motion, is the unconscious product of an infinity of small and unnoticed efforts. Its work is done, spasmodically and in disorder, by single individuals or groups of individuals, acting generally from immediate motives, with results which always transcend the knowledge and intentions of contemporaries, and are but seldom revealed, darkly and for a moment, to succeeding generations. To find a clue to the immediate, accidental, and transitory motives which have pricked on the men of the past to their labours; to describe vividly and whole-heartedly their vicissitudes and anxieties, their struggles and illusions, as they pursued their work; to discover how and why, through this work, the men of one generation have often, not satisfied the passions which spurred them to action, but effected some lasting transformation in the life of their society—this should be, in my opinion, the unfailing inspiration of the historian's task.

I hope that my book has enabled me to demonstrate that the Roman world-conquest, one of those amazing spectacles in history which, seen from a distance, seem to defy both comparison and explanation, was in reality the effect, remarkable, indeed, for its special conditions of place and time, of an internal transformation which is continually being re-enacted in the history of societies on a larger or a smaller scale, promoted by the same causes and with the same resultant confusion and suffering—the growth of a nationalist and industrial democracy on the ruins of a federation of agricultural aristocracies.

My intention is to continue the narrative, in succeeding volumes, down to the break-up of the Empire. We shall watch, in the generation between Augustus and Nero, the appearance of a new aristocracy out of the industrial democracy of Cæsar's age; we shall watch this aristocracy, all-powerful in a peaceful empire, crumble slowly to pieces through its own prosperity, while Christianity and the Oriental worships undermine its spiritual foundations; and finally we shall watch it as it is engulfed anew, and takes down with it into the deeps all that was most ancient and revered in Græco-Latin civilisation. Thus the book includes in its survey the entire course of one of the most remarkable societies in history, from its birth to its death—from the far-distant morning when a small clan of peasants and shepherds felled the forests on the Palatine to raise altars to its tribal deities, down to the tragic hour in which the sun of Græco-Latin civilisation set over the deserted fields, the abandoned cities, the homeless, ignorant, and brutalised peoples of Latin Europe.

TURIN: *December* 1, 1901.

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At the end of Vol. II. the reader will find a Bibliography explaining the abbreviations used in the footnotes, and four critical Appendices:

1. On the Corn Trade in Antiquity.
2. On the Chronology of the Campaigns of Lucullus.
3. The Relations of Crassus, Pompey and Cæsar between 70 and 60 B.C.
4. The War against the Helvetii and the Suevi.

CHAPTER I

THE SMALL BEGINNINGS OF A GREAT EMPIRE

Italy in the second half of the fifth century B.C.—The warfare between the small republics, and its causes—Rome as a small aristocratic and agricultural State—Its condition amid this warfare—The family organisation—Conservative spirit of the nobility—Rigidly aristocratic and republican government and institutions—Rome's early wars at the head of the Latin Confederacy, fifth and fourth centuries B.C.—Their results—Increase of territory, foundation of colonies, conclusion of alliances, increase of State and private resources—Abundance of slaves, diffusion of prairie pasturage, increase of precious metals—Gradual growth of luxury, fidelity to old ways of life, consolidation of the old landlord aristocracy—The victorious wars of the fourth and third centuries—Rome wins the political supremacy of Italy—Rural and aristocratic society at its zenith—Its virtues and defects—Conquest of Magna Græcia—First Punic War and conquest of Sicily—First signs of the trading spirit—The first middlemen-contractors—The nobility begin to engage in speculation—Beginnings of literature—First appearance of a democratic party—Caius Flaminius and the conquest of the Po Valley—The invasion of Hannibal—Strength and weakness, losses and gains, of Rome in the Second Punic War.

Rome in 450-400 B.C.

IN the second half of the fifth century before Christ Rome was still an aristocratic community of free peasants, occupying an area of nearly 400 square miles,* with a population, certainly not exceeding 150,000,† almost entirely dispersed over the

* *Cf.* Beloch, I. B., 29 ff. 69.

† It is true that according to Livy, iii. 24, the census of 459 B.C. counted 117,319 citizens, which would give a free population of about 400,000. But these figures do not seem to me probable, for the following reasons: (1) If Rome had at that time had as many as 120,000 soldiers, she would not have experienced so much difficulty in conquering the small neighbouring peoples. (2) A population of over 1000 inhabitants to the square mile could not possibly have subsisted, no matter how poor, at a time when Rome lived entirely on the produce of the land. (3) These figures do not agree with others which are more certain. If there were 165,000 citizens on a territory of 1045 square miles in 339 B.C., and 260,321 citizens on 1606 square miles in 293 B.C.

450–400 B.C. countryside and divided into seventeen districts or rural Tribes. Most of the families had a small holding and cottage of their own, where father and sons lived and worked together, growing corn for the most part, with here and there a strip of vine or olive. Their few head of cattle were kept at pasture on the neighbouring common land; their clothes and simple implements of husbandry they made for themselves at home. Only at rare intervals and on special occasions would they make their way into the fortified town which was the centre at once of their religion and their government. Here were the temples of the gods, the houses of the wealthy, and the shops of the artisans and traders, where corn, oil or wine could be bartered in small quantities for salt or rough tools and weapons of iron. Every Roman landowner was assigned according to his means to one of five classes, which were further subdivided into Centuries; by contributing his vote to the vote of his Century, which counted for one in the Assembly of the Centuries or *Comitia Centuriata*, he took part in legislation and in the election of the chief magistrates of the Republic.

The patricians, the knights and the plebs.

Yet although all the State offices were elective the constitution of Rome was doubly aristocratic. As they ascended from the poorer to the richer classes, the Centuries contained a proportionately smaller number of electors; and the higher magistracies were by a hereditary privilege reserved for a small number of patrician families, who could boast the possession of wider lands, more numerous herds and a certain number of slaves. The sons of Senators, together with plebeians of sufficient wealth and distinction, formed a separate order, intermediate between nobility and plebs. They were recognised by the State as Knights, and amongst their other privileges was that of serving in the cavalry in time of war. The plebeians too had organisations and privileges of their own. They held local meetings in their districts for the discussion of their particular interests: and every year they appointed Tribunes of the People, whose persons were inviolable, and who had the

(Beloch, I. B. 89), assuming the density of population to have been the same, Rome in 459 B.C. would have numbered some 60,000 citizens and 190,000 free men. But the density must have been less, as the country was poorer and less civilised: it follows, therefore, that we cannot account at the outside limit for more than 150,000 men and 45,000 citizens, which would give an army slightly larger than the 20,000 suggested by Mommsen. Any higher estimate seems improbable.

power of putting a veto upon any action of the magistrates. Moreover, the Assembly of the Centuries had a rival in the Assembly of the Tribes, a body consisting of all who were enrolled in the seventeen rural Tribes and in the four city Tribes which comprised the scanty voting population of Rome.* The Tribes superseded the Centuries, not only for the election of some of the less important magistrates, but for the transaction of current affairs. The chief power, however, still rested with the patricians, who were peasants like their fellows, and not above handling the pick and the plough.† The ordinary patrician dwelling was small and rude, their fare homely, and their clothes of the simplest; they possessed little of the precious metals, and almost everything that they needed, both in food and clothing, was made at home by their women-folk and slaves. 450–400 B.C.

Early Roman trade.

It was little enough, therefore, that Rome required to buy from abroad. Terracottas for the decoration of her public buildings and some imports of metal came in from Etruria, Phoenicia and Carthage, besides ivory work and ornaments, perfumes for funerals, purple for the ceremonial robes of the magistrates, and a few slaves. It was not difficult to pay for these in exports; timber for shipbuilding and salt practically made up the list.‡ The city itself was small and poor: even the rich patricians spent most of their time in the country, and came to town only for their official duties or to attend the sittings of the Senate, of which past magistrates, on the nomination at first of the Consuls and later of the Censors, were made life members. The power of the Senate included the superintendence of the magistrates, the administration of the treasure, the ratification of the laws and elections made by the Assemblies of the Centuries and the Tribes,§ and the discussion of the not infrequent question of peace and war.

Warfare in Italy.

For the whole of Italy, up to Liguria, Emilia, and the Romagna, which were still, like the Po Valley, peopled by

* *Cf.* the observations of Mommsen, R. F., i. 185, on the enactments of the Valerio-Horatian Laws of 449.

† Val. Max., iv. 4 and 5. Pliny, H. N., xviii. 3, 19. *Cf.* Marquardt, V. P. R. 2, 194.

‡ Schiller-Voigt, 291. Voigt, J. N. 2, 552, 557; Ciccotti, T. S., 146 ff.

§ I need not here deal with the question of the *auctoritas senatus* over the Assembly of the Tribes in the earliest times, a matter which is still *sub judice*. It is a detail of no great importance in a rapid account of ancient Rome, and one which it would be unprofitable to discuss at length.

450–400 B.C. tribes of savage Celts and Ligurians, was dotted with fortified strongholds similar to Rome itself, guarding the course of the rivers, keeping watch over the countryside from their rough hill-tops, barring the clefts of the mountains, or standing up as far-seen landmarks to the trader in his small vessel out at sea. The constitution of these small hill-communities was sometimes aristocratic and sometimes popular, but very seldom monarchical; each possessed a certain extent of territory; and many of them formed part of confederations drawn together by race or langauge—such as that of the Osco-Sabellians in the South, of the Latins, Etruscans and Umbrians in Central Italy, and of the groups of Greek colonies along the coast, with their centres at Ancona, Taranto and Naples. But these forms of union were of little avail to keep the peace. All through the peninsula, from township to township, between the upland and the plain, the river valleys and the sea, there was a continual warfare between tribe and tribe. It was fed by all the incitements that rouse savage races to arms in every age—the demand for more land and slaves, the desire for precious metals, the spirit of adventure and ambition among the chiefs or a fighting temper among the people, and the urgent necessity for aggression as a security against attack and annihilation.

[Tarentum.] [Neapolis.]

The Roman military system and its results.

Like the townships all round her, Rome too had become involved in this interminable contest. Indeed, she was exposed to even greater dangers than the majority of her neighbours. Though she had succeeded in grouping about her in a confederation the small rural republics of Latium which shared her Latin tongue, she still remained in a condition of perilous weakness. Her army consisted simply of her small proprietors in arms, under the command of their wealthier neighbours: for the man who owned no land had not the right to be a soldier. All landowners between the ages of seventeen and forty-six—and these at the middle of the fifth century B.C. must have numbered about 30,000—were obliged to present themselves before the Consul whenever a levy was proclaimed, ready to be grouped into legions and to take the field under the orders of their patrician magistrates.

Debt-slavery.

But a bitter hostility was gradually growing up between rich and poor. The population of their small territory was increasing too fast, and continual wars brought ruin and devastation in their train, while the excessive cultivation of cereals was slowly exhausting the richness of the soil.

Moreover, the unfortunate small landowners were being burdened with debt; while the nobility, whose numbers were increasing at an equal rate, continued to appropriate to themselves the best of the lands taken from the enemy, and to increase their herds of cattle on the public pastures, till they gradually deprived the poor altogether of their use. They had also been tempted into a practice which led to far-reaching abuses; they lent money at usury to the poorer proprietors and then reduced them to slavery on non-payment, in accordance with the ancient law of *nexum*. There was enmity too between the rich plebeians and the patricians; for the plebeians were still jealously excluded from the magistracies. All this led to constant quarrels and rioting between the different factions, sometimes even to a temporary split in the State, which not even the imminence of war was always able to appease. 450–400 B.C.

Yet once at the head of the Latin Confederation, Rome gradually brought the other towns and confederations of Italy within her power. The cause of her success lay in the vigorous discipline of her Constitution, which was strong enough to control that spirit of self-indulgence which is the most powerful solvent of national life. It was this that maintained a pure and simple morality among her rich and powerful class, which would have been the first to succumb to the vanity and vice that too frequently attend on the pride of conquest. Early Roman society.

The Romans were a primitive people without the defects peculiar to a primitive people. This was what enabled them to conquer nations more civilised than themselves which had been weakened by the temptations incident to their superior culture. Ancient Roman society may perhaps fitly be compared to life in one of the monastic orders in the middle ages. Both systems display the same methodical combination of example and precept, of mutual vigilance and unremitting discipline. Both show us a community in which the individual is entirely at the mercy of the feelings and opinions of his fellows, and where it is impossible for him to become emancipated from the tyranny of the group. Both succeeded in drawing out from their members, in the narrow sphere allotted to their labours, an energy, a devotion and a self-control far greater than could be expected from any one of them in his individual capacity. In early Rome, everything conspired to maintain and increase among the upper classes the influence of this powerful and minutely organised system. We find it in the distribution of wealth, in religion, in the

450–400 B.C. public institutions, in the severity of the legal code: we find it in a public opinion which demanded a relentless exercise of authority by fathers against their children or by husbands against their wives. We find it above all in the family, which gave the earliest and most deep-felt lessons in this stern and difficult discipline of the spirit.

The Roman family.

The Roman family was at this time in many ways still a relic of the patriarchal age; each household was a miniature absolutism that had survived the incoming of the aristocratic republic and adapted itself to the new needs of the age. Much of the effort required to maintain the moral and political order of society could be exerted, more efficiently than by the official magistrates, within the narrow circle of family authority. Thus, in fact if not in name, the household was a real and very necessary organ of government. The father was an absolute monarch in his own house; he alone could buy or sell, hold property or make contracts. He could exact as full an obedience from his son as from his servant, whatever the age or office he had attained. He could turn a rebellious child from his door, reduce him to penury, sell him as a slave or condemn him to work in the fields; he could claim childlike obedience from a Consul who returned home from a victorious campaign. He was supreme judge over wife, children, grandchildren and slaves; and the stern ordinance of custom might even require him to send them to their death for an offence against the family, or a neighbour, or the State.*

Early Roman education.

With powers such as these it was for a long time easy for parents, as each new generation grew up, to repress that youthful spirit of innovation which is in all ages the main source both of perversion and of progress; to train up their children in their own image and likeness; to accustom the boys to reverence and purity, to labour and sobriety, to the careful observance of laws and customs and of a narrow but tenacious patriotism, and to instruct them in the main precepts of domestic economy and agriculture; to teach the girls to live always under the authority of a man, whether father, husband or guardian, without the right to possess property, not even a dowry, to be gentle, obedient, and chaste, attentive only to housework and children; and to inculcate, in boys and girls alike, a scrupulous reverence for tradition, a loyal devotion

* Dion. Hal., ii. 25–27. Bonfante, D. R., 151 ff. Fustel de Coulanges, C. A., 100–105. Lange, R. A., i., 95 ff. *Cf.* the interesting case of C. Flaminius, Cic. de Inv., ii. 17, 52; Val. Max., v. 45.

to the old morality, and a horror of all innovation or luxury. It was the family which taught even the richer Roman, from the days of his youth, to be content with small enjoyments, to keep pride and vanity in check, to own submission, not to another man like himself—for monarchy he abhorred with a fanatical loathing—but to the impersonal authority of law and custom. It was the family too which taught him how to enjoy, and guided him safely through the years of early manhood, when man makes his selection among the pleasures of life according to the accidents of education and character, holding fast later to the life he has chosen with a contempt born of ignorance for all that he has rejected. And woe betide the disobedient or rebellious! Father and family tribunal would chastise son or wife without mercy: since both tradition and example counselled strictness, and it is easy for a judge to be severe when from the days of his own childhood he has known but little indulgence.* 450–400 B.C.

The Roman's career.

After this education, the noble Roman, still in his early manhood, gained his first experience of war through service in the cavalry: and before long he married a wife who brought him a small dowry and was to bear him many children. Then he began his long and gradual career of public life, coming before the people as a candidate for the different elective offices, according to the order prescribed by law. But no one could hope to win the suffrages of the people or the subsequent approval of the Senate unless he were known to be a respecter of tradition. And even in office his power was strictly circumscribed. If every Roman magistrate held important prerogatives, kept a numerous retinue under his orders, and was treated with solemn and ceremonial respect, yet the governing power was divided amongst a large number of individuals, all offices were unpaid and temporary, generally lasting a year, and every holder of office was given a colleague, his equal in rank and authority, for mutual supervision: while above and controlling them all was the Senate. Thus no magistrate could violate a law or a tradition without serious cause; all were obliged to yield in turn the obedience they had claimed; and on their return to private life they could be called to account for their public actions. From the cradle to the grave a Roman was spied on without ceasing; and when, at the death

* Fathers not infrequently went so far as to condemn their own children to death. *Cf.* Dion. Hal., viii. 79. See Di Marzo, S. P. C. R., i. 27.

450–250 B.C. of his father, the son became in his turn the absolute ruler of the household, he soon found that in the Forum, the Assembly and the Senate he was exposed to a supervision no less exacting than at home. The Censors might strike him off the roll of Senators for evil living, the people might refuse to elect him to office, and every individual citizen was a potential accuser.

The first annexations.

Thanks to this discipline of her upper classes, Rome was able to succeed where the Etruscans had failed, and to rise little by little above the other States of Italy. In the second half of the fifth century, and the early decades of the fourth century B.C., Rome, at the head of the Latin League, engaged in a series of wars against the Æqui, Volsci and Etruscans, which enabled her, not only, in 387, to institute four new tribes on her enlarged territory, but also to found several Latin colonies on 270,000 acres of good land taken from the enemy.* In this way many young men of the middle class, whose means might otherwise have debarred them from marriage, became citizens and proprietors in a new city, governed by laws of its own on the Roman model, and subject only to the obligation that her citizens should serve with the Roman legions. Encouraged by these first successes Rome was led on, during the end of the fourth and the first half of the third century, to undertake campaigns against the Samnites, Etruscans and Sabines, against the rebellious members of the Latin League, against the Gauls on the Adriatic coast, and the Greek mercenaries of Pyrrhus called in by Tarantσ. She thus annexed a vast territory of nearly 10,500 square miles,† including the whole of Latium, part of the eastern and western districts of Tuscany, the greater part of Umbria, the Marches and Campania, reducing the cities to *municipia* and their inhabitants to citizens obliged to provide military service and the *tributum* or war tax without the privilege of a vote.

[Cives sine suffragio.]

[Municipes.]

The allied States.

But her influence extended far beyond this area. During the whole of this time she was increasing her hold over cities and tribes in more distant parts of the peninsula. Alliances were contracted, sometimes by persuasion, sometimes by force: with Naples in 326, with Camerino, Cortona, Perugia, Arezzo, in 310, with the Marrucini, the Marsi, the Pæligni and the Frentani, in 305, with the Vestini, in 302, and afterwards with Ancona and Taranto. By the terms of these treaties the towns

[Perusia.]
[Arretium.]

* Beloch, I. B., 149. † *Id.*, 72.

and tribes, while preserving their own laws and institutions, undertook to supply Rome with military contingents and to consult the Roman Senate in the case of all disputes with other States. 450–250 B.C.

The process of land settlement.

These wars had, in short, created a Roman Protectorate over the whole of Italy, and entailed a considerable increase in the wealth as well as in the power of Rome. Not only had the State now far greater revenues at its disposal; it had also acquired a rich domain of fields, pastures and forests all over the peninsula, part of which was let out or granted in allotments, while the rest was reserved for future needs. Many patrician and plebeian families became wealthy through the purchase of slaves and land, laying large estates under cultivation in all parts of Italy, partly in corn, partly in vine and olive, and employing "families" of slaves under the supervision of a slave foreman, helped at vintage and harvest time by free day-labourers from the nearest town.* Others devoted themselves, more especially on the Common Lands of Southern Italy, to pastoral enterprise on a huge and primitive scale, not unlike what may be seen to-day in Texas and the prairie States of the American Union; their vast wandering herds of oxen and sheep, without stall or pen, grazing and sleeping under the open sky all the year round, were driven by slave shepherds every summer up to the mountains, and every winter down to the plains.†

Prairie pasturage.

Trade in the precious metals.

Another result of these wars was a very large increase in the supply of precious metals ‡ and in 269 or 268 B.C. Rome first coined silver money.§ The precious metals, always eagerly sought after by all peoples, whether barbarous or civilised, either as glittering adornments or as a form of wealth easy to carry and conceal, were in the ancient world by far the most universal object of commerce and barter, and the usual means of exchange between peoples on different levels of civilisation. Thenceforward the Romans were able to take part in international commerce, and to purchase the luxuries of Hellenic civilisation, with which, through the Greek colonies of Southern Italy, they were now brought into closer contact. ||

* *Cf.* Cato, *de Re Rustica* descri, who bes the estates of a rich noble at a time when the transformation of agriculture was just beginning. His book gives some idea of the agricultural management of a rich landlord in the third century B.C.

† Nitzsch, G. V., 16.

‡ Livy, x. 46. Schiller-Voigt, 294.

§ Babelon, M. R. R. I., p. xviii.

|| Schiller-Voigt, 287.

450–250 B.C. Thus families of small proprietors multiplied, and lived in increased comfort, on the territory of the colonies.

Consolidation of the old order.

But this increase of wealth did not at first tend to weaken the ancient traditions; nor was it immediately followed either by a change in manners or by a political revolution. The thrift and simplicity of the old times were still the proudest virtues of every noble family. The growth of prosperity, while it neither refined the mass nor multiplied the enjoyments of the individual, augmented and consolidated the strength of the State, both for peace and for war. It concentrated the power in a strong military aristocracy of rich landowners, fashioned in the mould of the traditional education; and it helped to conquer new territories and to people them with Latin cultivators and Latin soldiers.

Concessions to the plebs.

No doubt, as the middle ranks of society grew in numbers, prosperity and influence, the governing class was slowly reconstituted and the State became more democratic; but the change took place slowly and steadily, without any violent upheaval. By acquiring riches and employing them in the public interest many plebeian families became so influential that the patricians, whose wealth and numbers were now proportionately diminished, were compelled to recover their fortunes and retain their powers by frankly welcoming the rich middle class into their midst, intermarrying with their families and allowing them a share in the government. As early as 421 plebeians had been allowed to reach the lowest rung in the ladder of office, the Quæstorship; they thus received the power, as urban Quæstors, to prosecute all who were accused of capital offences, to administer the public treasure, and keep charge over certain of the public documents; or, as military Quæstors, to manage the finances of the army and direct the commissariat. In 367 it was further decided that there should be one plebeian among the two Consuls, the first magistrates of the State, who were responsible for convening the Senate and the Assemblies, controlled the elections of the magistrates by the admission or rejection of candidates, and raised the levies and commanded the armies in time of war. In 365 plebeians were admitted to be Curule Ædiles, to regulate the price and superintend the sale of cereals, to look to the preservation of public monuments, the policing of streets, markets, and open spaces, and the ordering of public festivals. In 350 they were admitted to the Dictatorship and the Censorship. The Dictatorship was an extraordinary

magistracy by means of which, at moments of exceptional crisis, the Constitution might for a time be suspended and full powers entrusted to a single man. The Censorship was an ordinary magistracy, held jointly by two persons, who compiled the quinquennial census of the names and goods of citizens and *municipes*, arranged the contracts for public works, superintended their construction and the recovery of taxes, and watched over the private character of public men, striking off the roll of Senators and Knights any who had proved themselves unworthy, or, in the case of a plebeian, taking away his political rights. In 337 even the Prætorship was opened to plebeians: the Prætors being the officials who judged civil cases between Romans or between Romans and foreigners, and filled the place of the Consuls when they were absent or disabled. Thus the old hereditary and exclusive aristocracy was gradually transformed into a mixed nobility of rich proprietors, who felt no difficulty in making concessions to the democratic spirit of the middle class, as it grew in importance with its increase in wealth and numbers. 450–250 B.C.

The powers of the Comitia Tributa.

It was not long before the plebeian Prætors began to extend the legislative powers of the Assembly of the Tribes, in which the middle class played a more important part than in the Assembly of the Centuries. The Senate was forced to give its opinion on a proposal before and not after the popular assemblies;* and by the *Lex Hortensia*, in 286, the resolutions of the Assembly of the Plebs received the sanction of law even without ratification by the Senate. Thus the Assembly of the Tribes entirely escaped from the control of the Senate, while about 241 the Assembly of the Centuries was reformed in such a way as to deprive the rich of much of their former influence. Finally, in more than one case the franchise was granted to *cives sine suffragio*—in 268 to the Sabines of Rieti, [Reate.] Norcia and Amiterno, and about 241 to the people of Picenum [Nursia.] and Velletri.†

The client system.

Yet the constitution of the Republic remained fundamentally aristocratic; for the new mixed nobility of patricians and plebeians well understood how to retain their predominant position. They checked the growth of a strong democratic opposition, such as we find in nearly every other ancient city State, by their striking military successes, their sound public administration, and by a wide system of dependence and

* Mommsen, R. F., i. 157. Willems, S. R. R., ii. 73.
† Beloch, I. B., 123.

350–250 B.C. patronage for the benefit of the middle class. Each of the rich senatorial families regarded it as a sacred duty to give help in money and influence to certain *protégés* among the middle class, and even to make it easy for any one who from time to time displayed exceptional courage or intelligence to climb the ladder of office to the ranks of the nobility.*

The Latin supremacy.

Thus safely shielded by the patronage of a conservative nobility the populace continued in the simple manners of their ancestors: they were still a body of sturdy and prolific yeomen, who spent the larger part of their scanty gains in bringing up new and more numerous generations of peasants and soldiers. This was the process by which, in the fourth and third centuries B.C., Rome diffused through the peninsula not merely her laws and her influence but her blood and her language: and was enabled, between 334 and 264, to found eighteen powerful Latin colonies, including Venosa, Lucera, Pæstum, Benevento, Narni, Rimini and Fermo, thus dispersing throughout the whole of Italy a race of stalwart Latin cultivators, who continued to increase on the new lands on which they settled, and to multiply the number of Latin-speaking folk amid the bewildering medley of Italian stocks and languages. These Latin yeomen devoted themselves alternately to the toil of the fields and the hardships of campaigning, regarding their pay in war time and the prize money they received from their commanders as a welcome addition to what they derived from their fields, and war itself as an industry complementary to agriculture. This continuous effort of war and conquest, lasting through several centuries, could only be successfully sustained because, thanks to the moral discipline and conservative spirit of her nobility, Rome remained, through all these campaigns, an agricultural, aristocratic and military community. The only durable conquests, even in ages of barbarism, are conquests made with the plough; the land belongs, not to adventurers who stain it with fierce and purposeless warfare, but to colonists to whom victory is but the prelude to the work sowing and tilling and peopling the earth.

[Venusia.] [Luceria.] [Ariminum.] [Firmum.]

The First Punic War.

It was with these peasant soldiers that the Roman nobility formed a skeleton of cities in the body which was later to be Italy, not exhausting but extending the powers of their State. It was with these that Rome issued victorious from her first struggle with Carthage, the great trading power whose ex-

* A typical instance is that of Cato the Censor. *Cf.* Plutarch, Cat. M., i. and 3.

pansion brought her inevitably into collision with the military and agricultural expansion of her Italian rival; and with these that a little later, from 225–222, she waged the decisive struggle with the Gauls of Italy, which laid open to her, with the conquest of the basin of the Po, the high-road of her future history. 250–200 B.C.

The old Roman character.

The boundaries of her dominions were enlarged, not by any bold or comprehensive effort of genius, but by the more methodical forces of patience and tenacity. If by the end of the third century B.C. Rome had become paramount in Italy, it was because the most admired virtues in every class of her State were those that are distinctive of a well-disciplined rural community. The Roman was sober and self-restrained in all his habits and simple in all his ideas and customs. He had a deep and loving knowledge of the small world in which he lived and a quiet and imperturbable intensity of purpose. He was honest, loyal, persevering, and displayed that curious absence of excitability so characteristic of a man who has no vices, who does not waste his strength in self-indulgence, and has but a limited stock of knowledge. In such a world ideas made but slow progress; novelties, unless they came in the guise of religion, found difficult entry; genius, like madness or crime, or any other unrecognised eccentricity, was entirely suppressed; custom, experience and superstition seemed the supremest forms of wisdom. Law and religion, both strictly formal, were held in the highest honour, preserving and crystallising among their distant grandchildren the cherished beliefs that had delighted or deluded the sagacity of their ancestors. Greek philosophy and every form of general theory were neglected. The literary language was rude and unfixed; the scanty literature consisted of a few hymns and folk-songs in Saturnian metre, and of such primitive forms of dramatic composition as Fescennine verses, "saturæ" and mimes. Thus eventually, by the last quarter of the third century B.C., the Romans found themselves in control of a vast territory with a population of nearly six millions, from which they could have raised at need no less than 770,000 soldiers, horse and foot: 273,000 citizens, 85,000 Latins, and 412,000 allies.*

But no influence in human affairs makes permanently or uniformly for good or for evil. It was in obedience to this law of constant change—a law which seems to be the one

* Polyb., ii. 24. *Cf.* Beloch, I. B., 94 f.

250–200 B.C. constant element in human society and history,—that, towards the middle of the third century, through the increase of wealth and the continuance of victory, this spirit of discipline and rural simplicity began to show symptoms of decline. The conquest of Magna Græcia, of the greater part of Sicily, of Corsica and Sardinia, the successful campaigns in Illyria, in Gaul, and against Carthage, had increased both income and expenditure. It had become necessary to provision great armies at a distance, and to build fleets. But as the Roman State, with its limited number of magistrates, originally intended to supply the needs of a small country town, was quite unable to cope with such extensive public needs, it became usual to entrust them to private contractors; and thus, between the two Punic Wars, there rapidly grew up out of the middle ranks of society a class of men who seem destined to be the first purveyors of luxury and commercial greed in all agricultural societies, as they were, for instance, in Italy after 1848,—the class of middlemen-contractors.* After the conquest of Sicily, the commerce of that island, which exported large quantities of oil and corn, naturally passed from the Carthaginians to the merchants of Rome and Italy.† The Roman aristocrats, who had till then been unwilling to hold property in anything but land, became infected with the desire to imitate the trading nobility of Carthage, which they had just defeated; they too began to launch their argosies, to speculate in Sicilian exports,‡ and to live in affluence. Social simplicity began to be impaired and domestic discipline to loosen its bonds. The family council was more rarely summoned; sons, thanks to the proceeds of campaigning, became more independent of their fathers, women less submissive to husbands or guardians; the nobility neglected its duties towards the middle class; in a few great families Greek culture was already spreading, while the literature and the literary language of Rome were being slowly perfected. Andronicus, a Greek of Taranto, taken prisoner at the capture of his native town in 272 and sold to a certain Livius, who gave him his freedom, translated the Odyssey into Saturnian verse, opened a school of Greek and Latin at Rome, and was the first to succeed in the

The mercantile spirit and the middlemen-contractors.

[Peculium castrense.]

* According to Livy, xxiii. 48, 11, it appears that in 215 wealthy contractors were already numerous at Rome. *Cf.* xxiii. 49, 1, and xxv. 3, 12.

† Polyb., i. 83. 10, shows that between the First and Second Punic Wars the number of Italian merchants was already considerable.

‡ Livy, xxi. 63. The reference here can only be to trade with Sicily.

translation or adaptation of Greek comedies and tragedies, and in the application of Greek metres to Latin versification. He soon found a follower in Nævius, a Roman citizen from Campania, who wrote a poem on the Punic War. 250–200 B.C.

The new spirit was fatal to the old friendly co-operation between class and class. A selfish and grasping nobility that looked to Carthage for its model inevitably provoked popular opposition. The first great leader to fight the battles of the Roman democracy was Caius Flaminius. When, in 232, Flaminius proposed to assign to the plebs a part of the Adriatic coastland taken from the Senones in 283 and from the Piceni in 268, he had to overcome a violent opposition on the part of the great nobles, who probably preferred to keep the rents of these lands for themselves. And when the Gauls on both banks of the Po took alarm at this policy and stirred up against Rome the great war of 225–222, which ended in the conquest of the Po Valley and the foundation of Piacenza and Cremona, the nobles were the first to lay the blame on Flaminius. Yet but a few years before they had themselves threatened Carthage with a fresh war for the annexation of Sardinia and Corsica, in which they looked to find the profits of a second Sicily.* **Caius Flaminius.** **[Placentia.]**

In the Gallic War, for the first but not the last time in Roman history, the people, not the nobles, were the aggressors. It was the democracy that cast its eyes upon the great plain that stretches at the foot of the Alpine barrier—a plain rich in fresh and fertile soil, covered with immense oak forests and huge tracts of marsh and lakeland, dotted with Celtic villages, watered by hurrying streams which bring down the gold of the Alps in their sand, and traversed from end to end by the great river which to the Romans, accustomed to the small mountain torrents of Central Italy, must have seemed a very prodigy. No noble of great lineage, but the head of the popular party, gave his name to the first great road, the *Via Flaminia*, that joined Rome to the Valley of the Po, and guided unconscious generations of her citizens outside her narrow city walls towards a mysterious future. The old aristocratic, agricultural and military society was nearing the limit of its greatness. If it was to play a further part in history it must be through a transformation of its character and institutions. **The democracy and the conquest of the Po Valley.**

But all these elements of discord were speedily overshadowed when in 218 Hannibal descended from the Alps into the Valley

* *Cf.* Lange, R. A., ii. 135, ff.

218–203 B.C. of the Po, at the head of the army with which the Carthaginian plutocracy hoped to destroy their upstart rival. To invade a country which could raise 700,000 men at need, with a comparatively small force operating at an immense distance from its base, was a feat of almost incredible daring. But the very fact that the issue remained doubtful for years is clear proof of the inherent weakness of the federation of rural republics that had Rome for its head. Where the mode of life—of feeling and thinking and holding property—is not identical, where, in a word, there is not one definite type of civilisation common at least to the upper and middle classes, there can be no organic nation, but only an accumulation of individuals held together for a time by the discipline of force. Now the agricultural and military aristocracy of ancient Rome had been able to diffuse its civilisation over but a small part of Italy. The dispersion of small Latin proprietors in colonies and *municipia* connected Rome with many regions of Italy by the ties of language, tradition and policy; but the colonies and *municipia* did not at that time cover even one half of the territory of Italy. The rest of the country was in the hands of allied cities, agricultural and aristocratic republics for the most part, which maintained a vigorous local life of their own almost entirely undisturbed by the central power. The Romans had indeed done their best, especially in Etruria and Southern Italy, to protect the territorial nobility, and had made them the supporters of the Roman cause in the allied cities; they had put an end to their murderous feuds, set them in command of contingents levied among the sturdy race of yeomen, and provided them with the means of winning distinction in war, of increasing both their wealth and their influence among their own countrymen. Thus it happened that the great families of Etruria and Southern Italy were bound by ties of hospitality, friendship, and sometimes even of blood to the foremost houses of Rome; and they were proud of it. They gladly learnt the Latin language and affected an admiration for the great city and its institutions, for the ideas and manners of its nobility.* But the people among whom they lived continued each to speak its own national tongue, and to keep alive the memories of old days, now wrapped in the halo of an irrevocable past. Possibly Hannibal may have

Hannibal and the Italians.

* For some instances of such patronage and friendship, *cf.* Livy, xxiii. 15, 7 ff.; xxiii. 2; xxiii. 46, 12. *Cf.* especially the case of the noble Samnite who fought for Rome in the Second Punic War at the head of a regiment, Livy, xxii. 24.

had some inkling of this widespread sentiment; perhaps he dimly understood that Italy was not yet a nation, but a confederation of little States many of which lived their own life by themselves, connected with the central power by only the loosest of bonds. His policy, at any rate, gives colour to the supposition. By promises, stratagems, or threats he persuaded many of the allied cities to revolt, while the Roman citizens and Latin colonists, welded together by the common danger into a true nation of aristocratic peasant-soldiers, heroically defended the land that their fathers had conquered, tilled and peopled, against the champion of the arrogant plutocracy of Carthage. 201 B.C.

Results of the Second Punic War.

Rome conquered in the end; for the solid virtues of many generations of mediocrity prevailed over the fortuitous and personal greatness of genius. But the old order, broken down by nearly a generation of fighting, could no more be reconstituted. In the tension of so unprecedented an effort, in the crisis of a war that lasted seventeen years, and not in Italy only, but in Spain, Greece, Sicily and Africa, Rome unlearnt much of her pedantic and superstitious conservatism. She had consumed all her reserves both of public and private wealth, as well as the vast plunder of Syracuse and Carthage; she had improved her military organisation and equipment; she had gained new opportunities for commercial enterprise; and she had relaxed the strictness with which she kept watch over her conduct. The observance of many political traditions, and of a few laws, such as that concerning the age and succession of magistracies, was indefinitely suspended. The old-fashioned prudence made way for a new spirit of adventure, whose typical embodiment was Publius Scipio. Only thus was it possible to bring the great war to a conclusion. Its results seemed a sufficient justification of the policy that produced them—the suzerainty of Spain, and the complete mastery of Sicily: the confiscation of part of the rich territory of Campania and Leontini: the ruin of Capua, and the weakening of all the non-Latinised Italian peoples: the 120,000 pounds of silver that Scipio brought home from Africa, and the annual tribute of 200 talents of silver that was imposed on Carthage for the next half century.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST MILITARY AND COMMERCIAL EXPANSION OF ROME IN THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

The wars in Macedonia, Spain, Liguria and the Po Valley, during the ten years after the conclusion of peace with Carthage—Political and financial significance of these wars—The feeling against annexation—Scipio and the new foreign policy—The war against Antiochus of Syria—Rapid growth of public and private treasure—Importance of public works and the provision of military supplies—The tax-farmers—Speculation on the public land—The pastures—Rise in the standard of comfort—Increase of trade between Italy and the East—Many Romans and Italians engage in commerce—Prosperity of Delos—Increase of the population of Rome—The rural exodus—Increased demand for slaves—Extension of the slave trade—Rapid growth of capitalism—Change in public opinion at Rome—Decline of the old conservative nobility—Weakening of the family—Relaxation of morals and public feeling—The struggle between tradition and the new foreign policy—Progress of literature and education—Ennius, Plautus, Pacuvius—Diffusion of Greek philosophy—The war against Perseus and its results—First symptoms of a crisis in Italian agriculture—Impoverishment and corruption of the aristocracy—Growing power of the financiers—Progress of the democratic spirit and consequent lack of discipline in the army—The Spanish war—Its military scandals and their effect on public opinion—Schemes of reform—The destruction of Carthage and Corinth—Conquest of Greece and Macedonia—Conquest of the Golden Fields near Vercelli—Pessimism among the upper classes with regard to the condition of Rome about 150 B.C.—The will of Attalus of Pergamus—Metellus Macedonicus and the first Greek artists at Rome—Publius Scipio Æmilianus—Reform movement among the upper classes.

Hannibal's heritage of warfare.

THE Second Punic War opens a new period of the world's history: for it hastened the advent of the commercial era in a society which had hitherto been military and agricultural. The conclusion of peace with Carthage left Rome with a heavy burden of warfare. Spain teemed with unsubdued barbarians; in the Po Valley the passing of Hannibal had rekindled the old spirit of independence; Ligurian pirates infested the waterways between Italy and the West, and raided the coasts of

Gaul and Spain; and Philip, King of Macedon, had taken up the challenge on behalf of Carthage. But the bloodiest struggle of all was over the regions now known as Emilia and Romagna, where the Boii revived in 200 B.C., and carried on for ten years without intermission, a harassing warfare of ambuscades and surprises, insincere negotiations and treacherous outbreaks. Finally, in 191, when their nobility had been practically wiped out, their country devastated from end to end, and the whole population capable of bearing arms annihilated, the survivors surrendered, and Rome was able to confiscate half of their territory.* 200–191 B.C.

Yet these wars were not waged in the spirit of aggression, but rather with a policy of national defence. At the end of the Second Punic War a party was formed at Rome, with Publius Scipio, the victor of Zama, at its head, which sought to oppose the ambitious imperialism which had become prevalent since the first victory over Carthage. It was a very natural reaction. The danger to which Italy had been exposed during the invasion of Hannibal had dismayed every clear-sighted intelligence. It was realised that Rome could not rely in an emergency on more than 200,000 citizens; that a large proportion of these, being peasant proprietors, could not be kept long under arms at a distance from their homes; that the policy of expansion tended inevitably to be unpopular among the middle class of the community, and that a fresh revolt of the allies was always a possible contingency. Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Spain, with the Valley of the Po, constituted an Empire already too extensive;† and it was unwise to undertake the conquest, government, and protection of new and more distant countries. **The new party of national defence.**

Yet this need not imply that Rome must remain inactive. In spite of the exhaustion in which Hannibal had left her, diplomacy could drive home the victories of her army. She could adopt a policy of small wars and constant intervention, and rely for her profits upon the weakening of her rivals. For she could still recruit large forces from among the peasant class for short periods of service; she had an excellent military system; in Sicily, Sardinia and Spain she possessed granaries which would supply any army at a distance without the risk **The new diplomacy.**

* The history of these wars is epitomised in the following passages of Livy: xxxi. 10 and 21; xxxii. 7, 26, 29–32; xxxiii. 22, 23; xxxiii. 36; xxxiv. 46; xxxv. 3, 22; xxxvi. 38.

† Mommsen, R.G., i. 177; Nitzsch, G.V., 75–88; Lange, R.A., ii. 189.

200–170 B.C. of scarcity at home; and, if she set her finances in order, she could easily raise the sums necessary for operations which would very soon bring in far more than they cost.

Rome as the liberator.

These arguments quickly carried the day. Scipio applied all his energy to financial reorganisation, and his policy resulted in a striking series of successes.* The Macedonian War closed without increase of territory. Greece and the Greek cities of Asia were liberated from Macedon, and Philip was forced to disband almost his entire army and fleet and to pay an annual tribute of fifty talents for ten years. Slaves and territory, silver and gold came in from the warfare in the Valley of the Po, in Spain, and in Liguria; while the campaign against Antiochus (189–183), a direct result of the Macedonian War, yielded enormous plunder in precious metals, besides the annual tribute of 1000 talents imposed for twelve years on the King of Syria. But there were no annexations; the territory taken from Antiochus was divided between Rhodes and Pergamus; and when the Syrian War was followed by an expedition against the Galatians, the tribesmen were left in undisturbed possession of their country. For thirty years this policy dealt successfully with the great States of the East. Pergamus was incited against Macedon, Macedon against Syria, Syria against Egypt, and every incident was coloured with a show of magnanimity. Rome was not fighting for herself, but to give liberty to the oppressed.

Increase of wealth in Italy.

But these wars did not fail to leave their mark upon Italy. The rapid increase of wealth served to hasten the changes in society and manners that had already been beginning half a century before. In the looting of cities in Greece and Asia, and the devastation of the countryside in the Po Valley and Spain, generals learnt a new indulgence towards themselves and their men.† Sometimes the legionary traded with the native on his own account; during the Macedonian War there were several instances of soldiers who acted as usurers.‡ Many a poor peasant returned home from the wars with a small fortune to his credit;§ and if a campaign promised to be lucrative, volunteers would flock in from all parts of Italy.‖ And where the private soldier drew profit the State drew far more. With tribute and plunder the finances were set in order, debts were paid, and money lavished on all manner of improve-

* Lange, R. A., ii. 187.
† Plutarch, Cato, M., 10.
‡ Livy, xxiii. 29.
§ Mommsen, R. G., i. 810.
‖ Livy, xxxvii. 4; xlii. 32.

ments. A spirit of spending was in the air; for the spread of Greek culture in some of the noble houses, and a general mood of innovation and enterprise, represented in politics by the party of Scipio, all tended to encourage a certain magnificence of execution. 206–170 B.C.

The influence of this movement is easily traceable in the field of home politics. The old policy of land distribution was revived for the benefit of the middle class; the twelve years between 189 and 177 witnessed the founding (besides many smaller colonies) of the six large townships of Bologna, Parma, Modena, Aquileia, Lucca, and Luni, in which the allotments were made on an unprecedented scale. 187 saw the beginning of the Æmilian Way, which was to connect Rimini with Piacenza. In 181 Cato undertook, amongst other tasks, the completion of the drainage system of Rome. In 180 40,000 Ligurians were transported from their native valleys to people the solitudes of Samnium. In 177 the Cassian Way was opened for use. The Censorship of 174 was remembered for the large number of public works undertaken at Rome and in the colonies. There was a rapid increase in the contracts for public works and military supplies. Applications were willingly entertained from young men of the middle class who had brought home a little capital from warfare in the East or in Spain, and tendered for contracts either alone, or with their friends, or with capital borrowed from some wealthy citizen who was to share in the profits. As the management of these affairs came to be better understood, and contractors multiplied at Rome and throughout Italy, they gradually developed into an intermediate class of capitalists, drawing a comfortable income from Government enterprise,* some of whom had the skill or the fortune to amass great wealth.

A middle-class policy at work.

[Bononia.] [Mutina.] [Luca.]

[Ariminum.] [Placentia.]

One of the most profitable forms of investment of course was land, in its various productive capacities. There were

* *Cf.* the famous passage in Polybius (vi. 17), which is one of the most important documents for the history of Roman Imperialism. I do not think Deloume (*Les manieurs d'argent à Rome*. Paris, 1890, p. 19 ff.) can have properly understood it. Polybius does not speak of great companies of *publicani* with large numbers of shareholders: what he does say is that at Rome there were so many contractors and small contracting companies that almost every Roman citizen could be said to have a share in these undertakings. Taking into account the allusions to contractors in Livy's narrative of the Second Punic War, and further the fact that Polybius is describing Rome as it was towards the middle of the second century B.C., it is legitimate to conclude that this capitalism was developed by the great public expenditure in the first half of the century.

200–170 B.C. many who employed their resources in the purchase of estates or the leasing of State mines, forests and plough-land, or competed for the farming of the Sicilian and Sardinian tribute (a tithe of the total produce of corn, oil and wine), or for the tithes or pasture-rights of the State lands. The year after the conclusion of peace with Carthage there was already busy speculation in the lands of Southern Italy,* which had fallen in value owing to the devastations of the war and the death of the proprietors; and later on, as capital and slave-labour became more abundant, speculation in the new State lands became general throughout the country. With so much land now available, many small proprietors among the Latins and allies easily secured State allotments † to add to their own estates, buying a few slaves for their cultivation with the savings of their campaigns; while the larger capitalists rented huge tracts of State land in Italy, or the Po Valley, or Sicily, to pasture enormous herds of oxen, swine, sheep and goats, under the control of slave shepherds. These great ranches must have been especially lucrative during the years of heavy military expenditure: for the army required large supplies of ham and bacon ‡ for rations, leather for tents, and goat-skin for siege engines.§. Some of the old Senatorial families and a good many private individuals made rapid fortunes, and the Sicilian estates proved particularly profitable.‖

Land speculation.

[Scriptura.]

But prosperity and the infection of the commercial spirit were slowly transforming the old manner of life. Soldiers who had seen the secrets of the East, and the contractors and landlords who had fed and housed them abroad, could not contentedly continue in the fashions of their ancestors. Not that the primitive customs of ancient Italy had been greatly influenced as yet by the refinements of civilisation; for in 174 Rome was still looked down upon by the Greeks as an overgrown village, without a single fine street or palace or monument; even in the capital the houses of the nobility were invariably small and destitute of ornament; and the old-fashioned education of the young was still in full force.¶

* Livy, xxxi. 13.

† I think it probable that the cultivation of the *ager publicus* by the Italians spoken of by Appian (B. C. i. 18) began after the Second Punic War, when land, money and slaves were cheap, and there was a general spirit of enterprise.

‡ Polybius, ii. 15.

§ Varro, de R. R., ii. 2.

‖ Diodorus Sic., xxxiv. fr. 32.

¶ Livy, xl. 5 ; Friedlander, D. S. G. R., i. 4, iii. 87 ff. ; Posidonius in Ath., vi. 109 (275).

Rome was too ignorant as yet to take lessons from Greece. 200-170 B.C.
But the passion for enjoyment, so long restrained, burst out in all the primitive and animal indulgences; in gluttony and sensuality, in the craving for violent excitement, and in that gross form of ostentation and display which marks the first blundering efforts of the countryman grown rich. A good *chef*, for instance, could claim an exorbitant wage *; and the frugal meals of earlier times were prolonged into interminable banquets, at which the rarest delicacies were provided; sausages and salt fish from Pontus,† and new wines from Greece; from Greece, too, they learnt the art of fattening poultry for the table.‡ Citizens were seen drunk in the public assemblies; and even magistrates were known to make their way to the Forum half tipsy, with gleaming eyes, and to break the tenor of their business by running to the great wine jars which the ædiles had set up in quiet corners of the streets and squares.§ High prices were paid for beautiful slaves of both sexes; and the depravities and excitements of Eastern life and worship became so popular that in 186 the Senate was obliged to suppress the orgies of the Bacchanals, and, five years later, to pass the Lex Orchia against banquets.‖ Middle-class audiences learnt to appreciate translations and adaptations from old Greek comedies; and even the primitive Latin festivals, now only too infrequent, would be seasoned with exciting interludes, such as shows of wild beasts or gladiators.¶ The Oppian Law against luxury was repealed; and the merchandise of the Orient found a ready market at Rome, where parvenus paid enormous prices for perfumes, Babylonian carpets, and furniture inlaid with gold and ivory.** What was done in Rome soon penetrated into the country; for the smaller cities naturally imitated the metropolis according to their means, just as the humbler local nobility aped the gluttony and splendour of their Roman superiors. The peasant from Umbria or Apulia who had fought in the rich lands of the East returned home, like a modern conscript disbanded from his regiment, with new ambitions and desires. Many a middle-class Italian resented the hard

Parvenu manners.

* Livy, xxxix. 6.
† Diod. Sic., xxxvii. 3. Ath., *loc. cit.*
‡ Pliny, H. N., x. 50, 139.
§ Lange, R. A., ii. 242. *Cf.* Macr. Sat., iii. 16, iii. 17, 2. These passages, dating from 161, describe the culmination of abuses which were just beginning at the time described in the text.
‖ Diod. Sic., xxxvii. 3, 5. Lange, R. A., ii. 228.
¶ Friedländer, D. S. G. R., ii. 390; ii. 359.
** Livy, xxxiv. 1 ff. Plautus Stich., ii. 2, 52 ff.

200–170 B.C. work which his father had pretended to enjoy, and would go to the wars with a servant to carry his pack and prepare his meals,* or buy more slaves for his farm to save working himself.

Increase of trade.

All this was an added stimulus to home and foreign trade, and commercial expansion followed as usual in the wake of conquest. The general growth of luxury among the middle and wealthy classes gave employment to artisans, and opportunities of profit to all possessors of capital. Both at Rome and throughout Italy there were hundreds of ex-soldiers and camp followers who had visited foreign countries and observed their resources, and were now pressed into the ranks of trade by the abundance of capital, the increasing demand for Asiatic products, and the extension of the Roman power in the Mediterranean. Many of these sold the lands of their fathers to purchase a ship; some, mostly it appears from South Italy, established themselves from 192 onwards at Delos, opening depots of Asiatic goods for Italian buyers, who came for a mixed cargo, and found it easier to make Delos than Corinth or Rhodes †; others traded between Delos and Rome, or in the Western Mediterranean. Numbers of small dockyards sprang up on the Italian coastline, and heavy rents were paid for the State forests of Sila, which supplied pitch for shipbuilding.‡ Even members of the Senatorial nobility joined in the profits of maritime trade by lending the necessary capital to citizens or freedmen. §

Its effect upon the capital.

Meanwhile at Rome the first public baths were opened soon after the Second Punic War,‖ and the year 174 saw the establishment of the first bakehouse for the benefit of unmarried tradesmen and labourers who could not get their bread made at home by slaves.¶ Many Greek workmen were brought to Rome by returning generals to assist in their festivals and triumphs.** So much foreign money came into circulation in the capital that many jewellers became money-changers; and many of these money-changers, encouraged by their profits and by the cheapness of capital, became regular bankers, accepting deposits and making loans. Multitudes of foreigners and Italians opened taverns and baths, set up as cobblers, dyers, jewellers and tailors ††; or became theatrical managers

* Plut., Paul. Æm., xxii. 2.
† Homolle, B.C.H., viii. 86 ff.
‡ Cicero, Brut., xxii. 85.
§ Plutarch, Cat. M., xxi.
‖ Schiller-Voigt, 399, *n.* 48.
¶ Pliny, H. N., xviii. 11, 107.
** Livy, xxxix. 22.
†† Plaut., Aul., iii. 5, 34 ff.

or playwrights. Plautus, an Umbrian from Sarsina, who had failed in various speculations, and tried his hand at several humble trades for a living, was now making money by adapting Greek comedies for Roman audiences with a spirited humour and considerable dramatic ability. The country people were flocking to Rome in such numbers that in 187 and 177 the Latin towns lodged complaints with the Senate.* The price of land increased with the population; wooden lodging-houses many storeys high, managed and sub-let by a freedman or a lessee, brought in a large income; for the labourers and small tradesmen of Rome would pay heavy rents for a single room.† In the suburbs high prices were paid for the lease of market-gardens, running water for dye-works, or lakes and hot springs for baths.‡ If a man inherited land in Rome or had been early enough in buying it, his fortune was made. 200–170 B.C.

The most far-reaching effect of this era of prosperity has been left to the last. It provoked an enormous increase in the slave trade. By the time these influences had been a generation at work there was hardly any one in Italy who was not in need of fresh labour: occupiers of State land required shepherds; the contractors required labour for public works or military equipment; the State required it for the public services; traders for the crews of their ships; the wealthy for domestic service or for gladiatorial shows; small proprietors and the middle class generally to relieve them of the more distasteful part of their daily work. **The demand for labour.**

But in the ancient world any nation which, through a rapid increase of wealth and power, was suddenly in want of a large amount of labour, could never find a sufficient number of men willing to work for wages without any other inducement beyond their own need or ambition. Thus the ancients were always forced back upon slaves. For the savage (and in this respect the civilised races of antiquity resembled their savage neighbours) has little liking for work, and still less for subordination. He will work a little as artisan or trader, if he is not subjected to control; and he will resign himself to dependence on others as a retainer or arm-bearer or bravo, if he is thereby saved from working; but he will never voluntarily submit both to work and to be in dependence. He would rather beg or steal. **The ancients and the dignity of labour.**

* Livy, xxxix. 3, xli. 8.

† For the high rents at Rome in the first half of the second century B.C., *cf.* Diodorus Siculus, xxxi. 18, 2; Pöhlmann, U. A. G., 74.

‡ Plut,, Cat,, M., xxi. 8.

200–170 B.C. Thus before long a slave traffic had been organised on the most gigantic scale. Slave-dealers found their way, not only into the military encampments where barbarian captives were promptly sold off cheap to the officers and common soldiers, or to the traders who followed the army, but also throughout the confines of the Empire, wherever petty monarchs and savage chiefs, like the negro kings of Africa, were ready to sell prisoners of war, or could be persuaded for a consideration to part with their own subjects. From farthest Gaul and Germany and the Caucasus long caravans of fettered slaves were continually descending to the smiling shores of the Mediterranean or the Black Sea, making for Marseilles or Aquileia, Panticapæum, Phanagoria or Dioscurias. The dealers, native and Italian, who awaited their arrival, paid the chiefs or their agents in wine and salt and the precious metals, and embarked them either directly to Italy or to Delos, where they were included in the general stock of Asiatic commodities.* A large number of Italians owed their riches to this traffic in human goods; some, adopting milder but no less lucrative methods, occupied themselves with the education of slaves, buying them at a tender age, and instructing them in profitable arts,† or drilling them in swordsmanship to be let out as gladiators at expensive funerals.

The slave trade.

[Massilia.]

The new capitalist bourgeoisie.

The first thirty years of the second century B.C. formed one of those happy epochs when any man can make a fortune even out of the smallest capital, because commerce, industry and adventure, and every kind of novel enterprise, are increasing rapidly and harmoniously. When labour is abundant profits are quick and plentiful; every accession of wealth brings new opportunities in its train; and the accumulation of capital is easy, rapid, and continuous. Many who had begun life poor ended it in comfort, and many ascended still higher, from comfort to luxury; by the side of the old nobility there was now a new bourgeoisie of wealthy capitalists, who had made fortunes in the slave traffic, in oversea trade, in farming the State taxes, lands or mines, or in army contracts. These men were enrolled by the Censors in the Centuries of the Knights; and thus the Equestrian order, which had formerly consisted of property holders of moderate wealth who were not nobles, soon developed into a class of rich capitalists and merchants. The commercial spirit was spreading upwards as well as down-

* Duruy, H. R., ii. 380.
† Plut., Cat. M. xxi.

wards, from the proletariat to the aristocracy, thwarting, even in the most conservative households, the obstinate prejudices of the agricultural age. Thus Cato, the representative of a Sabine family of moderate property-holders, who had made his way into the Senate, at first promised to figure as the persecutor of money-lenders and the regular type of the old-fashioned "landlord"; yet he subsequently plunged into business, associated with merchants and shipowners, speculated in land, and even engaged in usury and the slave-trade.* 200-170 B.C.

The new urban population.

And yet beneath this outward show of prosperity the seeds were being sown for a violent and far-reaching revolution. The rapidity of the transition from the old order to the new in all classes of the community involved a thorough readjustment of the whole constitution of society. It is true that those plebeians who remained in the country still lived a sober and honourable family life, after the manner of their fathers, respecting, with equal simplicity, the nobility and the law: but those who had settled at Rome in order to devote themselves to commerce or shopkeeping or contracting, or any of the urban professions, acquired all the vices that corrupt the populace of a rich commercial city; they became greedy, dissolute and excitable, with a continual craving for amusement and luxury; they criticised every authority and submitted to no rule; they rioted and swindled and refused the responsibilities of wedlock; and they displayed an unmeasured pride at the imperial greatness of Rome. Meanwhile the old Latin stock was slowly losing its purity, becoming contaminated into a mongrel mixture of blood from every race and country, as Levantines, Spaniards, Gauls and Scythians became absorbed by manumission into the citizen population. Before long the old veterans who had repelled Hannibal could hardly recognise the sober and sequestered country town which was the Rome of their youth. Every skirmish with a savage tribe was acclaimed to the skies as a prodigy of generalship; and the honours of a triumph were freely accorded† to any commander who won the favour of his men by relaxation of discipline and a brief and lucrative campaign. All Rome professed superior knowledge of strategy and tactics; and even in camp, face to face with the enemy, the rich and turbulent plebeians gave a reluctant and questioning obedience to the orders of their

* Plut., Cat. M. xxi.
† Mommsen, R. G., i. 810.

200–170 B.C. generals, and looked down, as subject-races, upon the Latins and allies.*

Representatives of the old order.

The upper classes were undergoing an analogous change. Of course, as always happens at a time of transition, there were families among the historic nobility who were as little able to take advantage of their opportunities as the majority of the old European nobility have succeeded in our own day in becoming captains of industry or lords of the money market. These continued to live in the old-fashioned style on a patrimony which had formerly been considered a fortune. Amongst them were the Ælii, who dwelt, sixteen of them, each with his own family, in a single house on the income yielded by a single estate; and similar conditions are recorded of the Fabricii Luscini, the Atilii Calatini, the Manlii Acidini and the Pauli Æmilii.† Others again, though clever enough to make money with the rest, preserved the ancient usages and ideas into an altered age, and were proud of posing as the champions of tradition. Perhaps the foremost representative of this class was Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, who, as Prætor in Spain, was largely responsible for the pacification of that country. By fair and liberal agreements with the principal tribes he saved the province from the horrors of insurrection, and freed it too from the curses of capitalism by replacing the Sicilian and Sardinian system of tax-farming by the form of tribute known as *stipendium*, a fixed payment, partly in kind, which was collected by the governor.‡

The new school of politicians.

But these after all were exceptional cases; and before long there grew up, even among the aristocracy, a generation of arrogant and ambitious politicians, who transformed the reasoned and moderate Liberalism of Scipio and his followers into a revolutionary movement at variance with all the ancient principles of social discipline, and destined to set public and private life at the mercy of passion and self-seeking; who were greedy, overbearing and unscrupulous, contemptuous of tradition and dazzled by the glamour of Græco-Asiatic civilisation.§ Young men stood for office before reaching the legal age, and did not shrink from open bribery to attain their desire; magistrates took to speculation, or made money out of their position; they would obtain grants of State land

* Plut., Æm. Paul., xi. and xiii., 4; Livy, xliv. 22; Neumann, G. R. V., 16 ff.

† Valerius Maximus, iv. 4, 8; Plut., Æm. Paul., v.; Cicero, de Leg. Agr., ii. 24, 64; Lange, R. A., ii. 293.

‡ Nitzsch, G. V., 146. § Lange, R. A. ii. 244 and 241.

from friendly Censors in excess of the limit fixed by the Licinian laws, or even usurp it as private property,* or embezzle the prize money due to the Treasury, or harass and plunder the subjects and allies.† The scions of wealthy families caused great anxiety by the spirit of insubordination they introduced into the *turmæ* or cavalry regiments in which they served.‡ 200–170 B.C.

Nowhere was the new school of policy seen to less advantage than in the sphere of foreign policy. The rising generation ran counter to all the traditions of Roman diplomacy, and ignored as a childish prejudice that Right of Nations which it had hitherto been Rome's boast to observe in all her dealings with the stranger. To despise all foreigners, to be always in the right, to make the end justify the means: these were the principles of the new diplomacy, which, with a perfidy that grew with each success achieved, reduced the allied States of Rhodes, Pergamus and Egypt to a position of ignominious dependence, and, alike in the independent republics of Greece and the great monarchies of Asia, fomented discord and espionage, sedition and civil war, always supporting the weaker and less reputable cause where its influence and prestige would find an easier foothold. In its dealings with barbarians it acknowledged no code of honour; they might be attacked and exterminated without cause or excuse or declaration of war§; yet they reserved the right to defend them against a civilised power if their protection appeared to coincide for the moment with the interests of their suzerain.‖ **The new diplomacy.** [Jus gentium.]

Inside the family the same influences were at work. Among the nobility many women won a large measure of liberty; they rid themselves at last of the perpetual guardianship of the husband, and secured the free administration of their dowry. Divorces and breaches of the marriage tie became far more numerous, while meetings of the family tribunal were now almost unknown. It was the beginning of a new age: and noble families living austerely apart in the observance of ancient tradition, impartial and philosophic observers of the times, old men who looked back upon the invasion of Hannibal, unsuccessful aspirants who were jealous of the upstarts, and all the melancholy company of pedants and **Old-time regrets.**

* Livy, xlii. 1 and 19; C. I. L., i. 583; Plut., Tib, Gr. 8.
† Livy, xliii. 2. ‡ Cat. Or. 5. § Livy, xlii. 7, 8, xliii. 1 and 5.
‖ Appian, Mithr., xiii.; Reinach, M. E., 96. The foreign policy of Rome at this period has been well elucidated by a young Italian writer, Corrado Barbagallo, in "Political Relations between Rome and Egypt, from the earliest times to 50 B.C." (Rome, 1901).

200–170 B.C. grumblers, merged their particular grievances in a common regret for the good old times when

Men dwelt secure in thrift and reverence.*

Their complaint, like that of Dante, so often re-echoed by the Conservatives and Clericals of to-day, was sufficiently comprehensive. They lamented the brutal exactions of the tax-farmers, the debasement of family life, the dishonesty of the new diplomacy, and the contaminating influence of the customs of the East. Sometimes they would even succeed in passing some law conceived to check the new abuses, or, in the disgust or excitement of some resounding scandal, won their way to a high position in the State. But such outbursts soon spent their force: the officious magistrates retired once more into private life, their prosecutions were postponed and forgotten, and their speeches and enactments slowly faded from men's minds.†

Mitigation of penalties for Roman citizens.

The new-fashioned leniency of public opinion was naturally reflected in legislation. In the first thirty years of the second century the penalties of death and scourging were abolished for Roman citizens both at Rome and in the provinces;‡ flogging was done away with in the army, and a more seemly procedure prescribed for the execution of soldiers who were Roman citizens.

The cosmopolitan electorate.

Thus, in spite of individual protests and scandals, the change in the manners of the nobility went on unchecked. The deadening spirit of caste exclusiveness, the regard for family and friends and dependents, the calls of ambition or avarice, superseded the old-fashioned promptings of duty; while attempts to hasten the transformation of the old agricultural society became more pronounced and determined. Numerous Censors, amongst others Titus Quinctius Flamininus, Marcus Claudius Marcellus, Marcus Æmilius Lepidus, and Marcus Fulvius Nobilior, carefully revised the roll of electors, with the object of increasing the power of the less conservative and more corruptible proletariat at the expense of the agricultural middle class. Thus they readily enrolled as citizens the Latins who came to Rome as retail dealers and labourers, and even gave political rights to freedmen who were not Italians at all and allowed them to vote in the thirty-one

* "Si stava in pace sobria e pudica," Dante, Parad. 15, 99.

† *Cf.* Livy, xlii. 22, xliii. 2.

‡ Lange, R. A., ii. 519 ff.

rural Tribes, hoping by this means to diminish the predominance of the country voters in every constituency, and to build up a cosmopolitan and heterogeneous electorate with a far-reaching democratic programme, such as has never perhaps been seen again till in the United States of the present day. Here surely is one of the strangest of the ironies of history. It was a cosmopolitan democracy, recruited from among the foreigners who had drifted by chance to the great city by the more degenerate section of her ancient nobility, which, in face of the hostility of the truly Roman population, who clung fondly to the customs and the policy of their fathers, effected the decisive transformation that rendered possible the Imperialism and the Empire of Rome.* 200–170 B.C.

Aggrandisement abroad and commercialism at home, the cosmopolitan immigrants and the debasement of Roman nationality, all tended to undermine the ancient structure of society. But it was education, the last and most powerful of dissolving forces, that laid it finally in ruin.

The philosophy of Greece, and more especially of the Stoics, was now being taught in noble houses, opening men's minds for the reception of general ideas; and the theories elaborated by Greek thinkers on the familiar themes of democracy, aristocracy and tyranny began to be recognised and discussed by a nobility which had hitherto steered its course only by the fitful lights of experience and tradition. The tenative literary progress which had begun half a century back now reached its climax, amid a medley of races and classes, ideas and customs, and through writers who were themselves the product of the new cosmopolitan society, in the appearance of the first writings in Latin literature at once sustained enough and original enough to rank as classics. The Umbrian Plautus produced, in racy and powerful language, what were to be the best of Latin comedies, whilst from Apulia (the ancient Calabria), half Greek and half Italian by birthright, Rome claimed Ennius, the father of Latin poetry, who purified her language, taught her the hexameter, and composed a history of Rome and a treatise on cookery to flatter the pride and the gluttony of his parvenu patrons. Pacuvius, a painter and a poet from Brindisi, wrote tragedies which long retained their vogue; and another favourite comedy writer was found in an Insubrian Gaul named Statius Cæcilius, probably a native of

The new education.

* *Cf.* on this important question Neumann, G. R. V., 88 ff.; Lange, R. A., ii. 218 ff.; 249, ff.; Nitzsch, G. V. 132 ff.

172–168 B.C. [Mediolanum.] Milan, who had been captured during the conquest of Cisalpine Gaul and sold into slavery at Rome. Greek painting and sculpture on the other hand were but little known in the capital, and the artists of the Greek colonies in Southern Italy sufficed at present for the needs of the rest of the peninsula.

Æmilius Paulus and the reaction.

The war against Perseus (172–168), son of Philip of Macedon, who had attempted to reconquer the territory lost by his father, marked an apparent reaction against the commercial spirit of the new era. Owing to the incompetence of the generals and the insubordination of the soldiers, the war opened with a series of decisive defeats, which for the moment so damaged Rome's prestige in the East that a number of small States and independent towns took sides with her enemies, while Antiochus of Syria actually declared war and laid hands upon Egypt. But Rome rose to the need. The people put the campaign into the hands of Æmilius Paulus, an illustrious survivor of the Second Punic War, who, neglected by the statesmen of the rising generation as hostile to the manners and the politics of the age, had been living for many years in retirement. Paulus restored discipline in the army; and when victory brought him the usual pile of plunder to be distributed, he kept a small share for his friends and his soldiers and none at all for himself, handing over the rest to the Treasury. It was certainly Paulus too who was responsible for the chief articles of the peace, which the Senate approved. Macedonia was not annexed, but divided for purposes of government into four separate districts, each deprived of all trading rights with the others: a tribute was imposed equivalent to half of what Macedonia had paid to its own king; and the gold mines were shut down in order to prevent an influx of Italian capitalists.* At the same time the Censors Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus and Caius Claudius, in the hope of curbing the scandalous avarice of the contractors, made a scrupulous revision of the roll of Knights, and attempted to diminish the power of the cosmopolitan proletariat by excluding freedmen from the city tribes and confining their activities to a single electoral unit.† At one moment it seemed as though the Senate and the electors had been frightened into moving steadily backwards on the track of a vanished age.‡

But the reaction was short-lived. The huge sums paid into

* Livy, xlv. 18 and 29.
† Nitzsch, G.V., 162 ff.; Lange, R. A., ii. 277.
‡ Lange, R. A., ii. 228 ff.

the Treasury by Æmilius Paulus at the conclusion of peace caused a rapid increase of wealth in all classes of the community*; and the accidents of war were soon engulfed and forgotten in a fresh whirlpool of corruption. By the fall of Macedonia Rome was now indisputably paramount in the Mediterranean, and her diplomacy became more violent and more perfidious than ever. The proffered allegiance of the kings of Bithynia and Pergamus was rejected with contumely. Antiochus Epiphanes was ordered off brusquely, like a mere dependent, by the ambassador Popilius, from the siege of Alexandria. Throughout Greece and Asia all who hesitated to submit were visited with summary punishment. Delos was made over to Athens, and Antissa razed to the ground. Throughout the towns of Greece distinguished citizens were executed or deported to Italy; Achæa alone contributed a thousand exiles, amongst them perhaps the greatest of the historians of antiquity, Polybius. One faction at Rome clamoured for the destruction of Rhodes on the vague charges that she had hoped for a Roman defeat in the Macedonian War, and that her citizens were over-arrogant. The true cause behind these pretexts was the desire for loot.† But the Senate disappointed their expectations. Where they had hoped for plunder, it was content to destroy. It declared Delos a free port; and the warehouses and the custom dues of Rhodes soon passed to the Holy Island, which rapidly grew to be a rival to Carthage and Corinth.‡

168–154 B.C.

New wars in the East.

But the prosperity diffused by warfare is never more than momentary, and a period of depression now automatically supervened. It was felt in trade and speculation as well as in foreign policy. With Cisalpine Gaul, Liguria, and Spain reduced to obedience, and the East lying prostrate after the Battle of Pydua, there were between 168 and 154 neither important campaigns nor occasions for intervention. There was a cessation in the demand for military supplies, and peace deprived both nobility and peasantry of the customary profits of campaigning.

Fifteen years of peace.

The sums spent upon public works, instead of increasing year by year, remained stationary after the conclusion, in the preceding generation, of the great enterprises which had been required to make Rome adequate to her new position in Italy. The State Treasury was thus unable to dispose of its surplus,

Slackening of the pace in commerce and speculation.

* Polybius, xxxii. 11. † Aulus Gellius, vii. 3, 6.
‡ Polybius, xxxi. 7; Homolle, B. C. H., viii. 93 ff.

170–140 B.C. and by 157 B.C. it contained 16,810 pounds of bullion in gold, 22,070 in silver, and more than 61 millions of coined silver.* Even speculation on the State lands had come to a standstill; for the larger and better portion had already been disposed of, either on lease, or by division among colonies, or through the appropriation of powerful families. Commerce, too, began to languish when slow profits became the rule. Thus the generation which had grown up amid the short-lived prosperity of the Macedonian War found the stress of competition far severer than their fathers.

Rise in the standard of comfort.

But there was no decline in the cost and the comforts of living, which seemed to multiply regardless of the conditions of money-making. The new generation was more greedy of wealth and amusement, shyer of hardships and fatigue, than its predecessor. This indeed seems almost one of the commonplaces of history. The desire for an increase of luxury springs up at first among quite a small section of the population, but if it persists unchecked by the assaults of convention, which it must necessarily offend in the pursuance of its object, and if the sources of wealth are not drained dry, it will grow from year to year and from generation to generation, with the rise in the quantity of social aspirants and the measure of their desires, through the contagion of example and the rivalry incident to human nature, in an almost automatic ratio; for as an ancient society gradually breaks up, there must be a growing number of persons who are unable to live in the old style, and compelled to attempt to live in the new. Thus, almost imperceptibly, a complete transformation is effected, in traditions, in institutions and in ideas, until the needs of the new society are adapted to fuller and richer conditions of enjoyment. This was the experience through which Italy passed in the second thirty years of the second century B.C. The cost of living increased not only at Rome, but throughout Italy, in town and country alike; comforts became needs, and luxuries comforts; gluttony and debauchery spread through Italian society, ruining body, soul and fortune †; and when prices rose (it is difficult to say in what proportion) owing to the abundance of money, the income of many landowners diminished, particularly as the natural increase of the country

* Pliny, H. N., xxxiii. 3, 55.

† This is proved by the fact that in 143 B.C. the *Lex Didia Cibaria* extended to the whole of Italy the restrictions of the *Lex Fannia*; *cf.* Macrobius, Sat., iii. 17. See also Pliny, H. N., xvii. 25, 244; Polybius, xxxii. 11.

population failed to be relieved or retarded by the perils and profits of campaigning. In the environs of Rome, however, rents still continued to rise, with the steady increase in the numbers and wealth of the capital. Cispadane Gaul too, comprising the recently conquered districts of Emilia and Romagna, seems to have suffered less than other districts,* probably owing to the fact that the Æmilian Way was much frequented by the armies which moved to and fro in the Valley of the Po, by passing traders and convoys of slaves and the flocks and herds which were driven southwards to Rome; so that in the towns founded along its course the produce of the surrounding country found a ready market. 170–140 B.C.

Very different was the lot of regions and townships wholly isolated from the great roads, especially in the south of Italy. The Italian landowners of this time made corn their staple, together with just enough vine and olive for home consumption.† But in the ancient world, even in countries provided with good roads, corn always needed to be sold in neighbouring markets, because the risk and the expense of carriage raised the price too high for conveyance to a distance; while the native products of the day, such as wine and oil, were badly prepared, and often, owing to the lack of roads, practically impossible to transport. Thus whenever the small or moderate landowners of a remote district of Italy grew more than they needed, they were forced to place it on the market at rates so cheap as to appear miraculous to Romans, after the high prices and standards of the metropolis.‡ **Difficulties and decline of agriculture.**

It is not surprising therefore that usury soon became the scourge of the Italian country side. Numerous families who had been peaceably established for centuries round an ancestral hearth were forced to break up and venture forth along the great roads of Italy into a larger world. Thus the old-fashioned Italian system of cultivation was slowly undermined, and with it sank slowly into the ocean of the past all that survived of federal Italy with its multitudinous dialects, Oscan, Sabellian, Umbrian, Latin, Greek, Etruscan, and Gallic, with its countless walled and turreted townships, its small isolated allied republics, its Latin colonies and Roman *municipia*. Many of the financiers and senators who made their mark at Rome at the beginning of the next century were sprung from families in the **The rural exodus.**

* Mommsen, R. G., i. 852. † Max Weber, R. A. G., 223, 224.

‡ *Cf.* Polybius, ii. 15, for the extraordinary cheapness of provisions in the Valley of the Po. It must have been much the same in all districts far removed from the great roads.

170–140 B.C. *municipia* and the Latin colonies*; and we may be justified in assuming that half a century earlier many distinguished families from these townships made their way to Rome under the pinch of poverty, hoping to rise once more on the social ladder, or at least to live in modesty removed from the embarrassing gaze of those who had seen them in prosperity. Thus, too, many young men of the middle class were obliged to abandon the country to seek their fortune in the nearest town; but as the country towns were impoverished by the emigration of the great families and the increasing distress of the peasants, the great majority of the incomers moved gradually on to the capital. Thus the struggle for existence became more exacting both at Rome and in Italy. In every trade and in every undertaking where capital could be employed, competition increased and profits diminished. There were no new openings for activity; enterprise seemed stagnant; and before long over the whole of the peninsula distress seemed to have gathered like some huge poisonous morass, filling the air with venom for rich and poor alike; while at Rome, whither men flocked in thousands, fascinated by the rumoured opulence of an imperial metropolis, starvation was a spectre for ever looming on the horizon As the city expanded to admit the new-comers it became necessary to look for corn in more distant markets: but the more distant the market the higher the price of bread; and whenever there was a bad harvest the populace suffered from hunger and sank deep into debt.†

Decadence of the nobility.

But a yet more serious evil still remains to be told: the impoverishment, corruption, and disappearance of the old Roman aristocracy. Among the noble families that had grown rich during the prosperous years at the beginning of the century, the younger members, combining the arrogance of their fathers with the vice and precocity of their contemporaries, grew up to manhood morally and physically enfeebled. In others, which had been too proud or too incompetent to keep pace with the times, one generation might painfully sustain an obsolete convention of simplicity, but the next would succumb before the force of example. Many young men had sunk deep into debt; others dismissed their dependents, sold the house of their fathers, and disappeared into the crowd to live in hired lodgings on the remains of their inherited wealth.‡

* Willems, S. R. R., i. 179 ff. † See Appendix A.

‡ *Cf.* the history of the family of Sulla (Plutarch, Sulla, i.)—a typical example of the decadence of noble families which became so frequent

A few still hoped to repair their fortunes in the game of politics. 170–140 B.C.
Little by little, almost unnoticed by contemporaries, the ancient ruling aristocracy, which regarded power as a responsibility, yielded up its time-honoured authority to nobles who were either rich and degenerate or poor and corrupt: who looked down on the millionaires newly enrolled among the knights with all the patronage of jealousy, yet exerted every influence to cultivate their acquaintance. It is true that corruption was not yet entirely open and shameless; from time to time Rome would still profess horror at the revelation of a scandal such as the affair of the Prætor Hostilius Tubulus, who was convicted in 142 of having sold his verdict in a murder trial.* But how was it possible to keep watch and ward over the subterranean channels of intrigue and corruption? Who could call rich magnates to account for insidious entertainments that broke down the last scruples of a needy and gluttonous nobility? Who could gauge the exact influence of money or dependents in an election, or proclaim the opportune and unacknowledged distributions of *partes*, or shares, in the syndicates of the tax-farmers? A few significant facts are worth putting on record. The gold mines of Macedonia, which had been shut down by Æmilius Paulus, were leased ten years later (to the surprise of ingenuous contemporaries), together with the Crown lands of the kings, to a small ring of Roman capitalists.† Whenever a rich knight was summoned before the Senatorial tribunal, whatever the nature of the charge, his acquittal was always assured by the defence of influential patrons.‡ Financiers began to appear in the seats of honour in the theatre, and to exercise the privileges of Senatorial rank.§ Money, in fact, had become the supreme power in the State.

Demoralisation of the Army.

A yet graver evil was the disorder in the army. As vice, arrogance and cupidity spread through the greedy oligarchy of artisans and freedmen, shipowners and contractors, which was now the nucleus of the Roman people, as the degenerate nobility, stripped in their decline of both wealth and influence, came to regard power merely as a means of acquiring the riches which it had once been their pride to expend for the State, so the spirit of democracy caught fire

at this period and serves to explain the corruption at the time of the Jugurthine War.

* Cicero, ad Att., xii. 5, 3; De Fin., ii. 16, 54.

† Cic., De Leg. Agr., ii. 19; Cassiod. an. 596–158.

‡ *Cf. e.g.* Cic., Brutus, 22. § Lange, R.A., ii. 317 ff.

170–140 B.C. from their example and ran riot through the ranks of the poor and humble.* Men proclaimed, not in whispers, that the People was master of the State; and the doctrine, though it did not yet undermine the whole fabric of the Republic, had at least succeeded in demoralising the discipline of the army. The Consuls, who raised the levies, tried to evade unpopularity by exempting a large number of Roman citizens from military service in distant countries; for the rich thought it intolerable to be drafted off into the field from their business or their amusements. Officers no longer dared to punish citizens who could retaliate within a year or two at the elections: they were compelled to allow slaves and prostitutes to appear in camp, to sanction new-fangled indulgences like hot baths or heavy drinking, to overlook acts of cruelty and looting and cowardice, till all ranks in all the armies had lost both discipline and prestige.† Every expedient was adopted to relieve the masters of the Empire from the burden of defending it—by lowering the property qualification for military service, by reducing the term to six years, by granting complete exemption after six campaigns,‡ or by enlarging the contingents from the Latin colonies and the allies, amongst whom there was still a plentiful supply of sturdy peasants.§ But now that the citizen legions, once the pattern and glory, had become the scandal of the camp, it was no longer possible to maintain discipline in the cohorts of allies and Latins, and the armies degenerated into schools of gluttony, license and violence.

The birth and parentage of Roman Imperialism.

It was during this slow decomposition of the military, agricultural and aristocratic society, which began after Rome had won the supreme power in the Mediterranean, and through the working of the forces of commerce and capitalism, that Roman Imperialism, as we know it, was called into being. The spirit of brutality and arrogance, heightened in all classes of the community by the consciousness of controlling imperial riches and dominions, the cupidity of the nobility and the capitalists, and the widespread dismay at the demoralisation of the army, transformed the wise and moderate policy of diplomatic intervention devised by Scipio into a relentless policy of aggression and annihilation. It was inaugurated by the third declaration of war against Carthage (149), followed by the conquest of Macedonia (149–148) and of Greece (146): while, in 154, war broke out once more in Spain. This was

* Appian, Pun., 112.
† *Id.* 115–117; Hisp., 85.
‡ Nitzsch, G. V., 231.
§ Neumann, G. R. V., 17–18.

regarded at first as a mere punitive expedition against a small allied people: but soon defeat followed defeat; and, worse still, when it was known at Rome that the Spanish campaign was no mere military promenade, but a long and difficult struggle, it became impossible to find either soldiers or officers to take part in it. 150–140 B.C.

This scandal, which revealed all the latent abuses first detected by keen observers during the war with Perseus, intensified the uneasiness which had been felt for some time past at the growing wealth and prosperity of Carthage. Cato vigorously resumed his old and familiar propaganda, urging Rome to destroy her rival before she was herself destroyed; and this time the suggestion found favour, thanks to the united support of the needy aristocrats, to whom war spelt plunder, the rich capitalists, who hoped to capture the trade between the interior of Africa and the Mediterranean, the shrewd calculations of the contractors, and the unthinking ferocity of the urban proletariat. It was in vain that the last upholders of Roman chivalry strove to avert an uncalled-for aggression upon a peaceful power. After a treacherous declaration of war, after shameful reverses, and three years of hard fighting, Carthage was burned by Scipio Æmilianus, and her trade passed into the hands of the Roman merchants.* At the same time, encouraged by the Roman defeats in Africa and Spain, Macedonia and Greece rose in revolt against their master. Both were conquered and visited with an equal vengeance—they were annexed to the Roman Empire as provinces and plundered through and through. The illustrious and still thriving city of Corinth was laid in ashes, to the horror of the Greeks. A few years later, in 143, and entirely without provocation, the Consul Appius Claudius attacked the Salassi in the wilds of Piedmont—the Transvaal of Roman capitalists—and deprived them of part of their auriferous territory; the workings were promptly rented by a Roman company, which brought in more than five thousand slaves, and made Victumulæ, in the region of Vercelli, the centre of the mining industry in Piedmont.† At the first symptoms of its decadence the Roman public burst out in a passion of pride and savagery which swept Corinth and Carthage clean from their foundations. **Destruction of Carthage and Corinth.** 149–146 B.C. [Vercellæ.] 146 B.C.

But there were thinkers at Rome who could hear quieter

* Suet., Ter. Vita, c. 1.

† Strabo, v. 1, 12 (218); Pliny, H. N., xxxiii. 4, 78; C.I.L., v. p. 715.

150–140 B.C. voices behind the shouting and the victories. Men such as Cato and Sempronius Gracchus, Scipio Æmilianus and Metellus Macedonicus, Caius Lælius, Mucius Scævola and Licinius Crassus Mucianus, were wise enough to know that these outbursts of fury only accelerated the decadence that they affected to belie or to retard. They felt a patriotic pride, it is true, in the newly acquired power and wealth of their country, and hoped to make use of it to further the general progress of the arts; Metellus, the conqueror of Macedonia, planned the building of two temples, to Jupiter and to Juno, with a magnificent colonnade all round, and brought over architects and sculptors from Greece, amongst them two brothers, Polycletus and Timarchides, who were the first to acquaint Rome with the finest Attic work.* But they could not resign themselves to the disappearance of all that was best and most beloved in the ancient society, the family discipline, the self-control, the civic enthusiasm, the harmony of classes. What would happen to Rome if the country population continued to decline in numbers and resources, if all Roman citizens abandoned agriculture to become merchants or contractors, artisans or beggars, if the luxury, indifference and corruption of the nobility went on unchecked? The visible greatness of Rome was not enough to reassure the anxieties of far-sighted observers. True, her astute and perfidious diplomacy had safely hastened the downfall of the great kingdoms of the Orient. From Pergamus to Egypt, her Eastern neighbours were so enfeebled by intrigue, so paralysed by the violence of the Senate and its ambassadors, that Rome was shortly to witness one of the strangest surprises in history, the extinction of a rich and powerful monarchy by

The enlightened conservatives.

133 B.C. suicide. Attalus, King of Pergamus, died within a few years of this time, leaving his kingdom and his subjects to the Roman people. Thus, without moving a legion, by the simple exercise of her overwhelming prestige over a long established and decadent dynasty, Rome was to lay her hands on one of the richest and most fertile regions of the world. Her most feared and hated rivals, Carthage and Corinth, were now both destroyed, and her power was being slowly consolidated in Asia and throughout the Mediterranean basin. Yet the wild tribes of Spain still maintained an obstinate resistance, in spite of organised devastations and indiscriminate

* *Cf.* Pliny, H. N., xxxiv. 8, 52, and the arguments of Brunn, G.G. K., i. 535 ff.; Overbeck, G. G. P., ii. 428 ff.; B. C. H. 5., 390 ff.

massacres which impoverished the treasury and exhausted the army; and this alone was sufficient to dismay far-seeing observers. The instinct of conservatism, which puts a drag upon history in every age, and vainly seeks to evade the suffering necessary to progress, sprang to its labour of self-defence; and on every side men raised the lament of the wise, and the over-wise, when a society is dying. It is true that in the change, by a law of compensation whose working is invisible to contemporary observers, the evil often perishes with the good. Amid the accidents and the confusion of history men criticise events from their immediate results; they instinctively resent the loss of anything that is dear to them; and they stand continually in dread of an utter and final extinction, amid the suspense and vicissitudes of an age that is slowly dying and an age that is coming to birth. For the fitful and mysterious movements of history are like the alternations of night and day in the far Northern summer—a long, almost endless, day, a long twilight, then the extinction of all the visible world in the total darkness of a brief midnight; then again the long twilight of morning, heralding the dawn of a new light over the world. But when he has lived through the splendour and sunshine of a familiar civilisation and watched its slow decline in the darkness, man thinks that the light is quenched for ever, and turns back in a blind and instinctive despair to worship the sun of a vanished day. Thus the clearer spirits of that age desired to restore all that was excellent in the ancient society without surrendering what they welcomed and respected in the new, to fuse the dead past with the living present: to reconstitute the class of small proprietors which supplied the army,* to regenerate the aristocracy in all its old-time simplicity,† and to recall Romans to their duty of raising a numerous family.‡

150–140 B.C.

The conservative instinct.

It was this eternal illusion and contradiction, which mocks men at every turn in the onward road of civilisation, that was at once the torment and the greatness of the best known and most typical figure of this generation. Publius Cornelius Scipio Æmilianus, son of Æmilius Paulus, and adopted by a son of Scipio Africanus, was both a thinker and a man of action. With a keen

* Scipio Æmilianus and Laelius had anticipated Tiberius Gracchus in proposing to grant allotments of land to poor soldiers—Plut., Tib. Gr. 8.

† *Cf.* the speech of Scipio Æmilianus, Aul. Gell., iv. 20.

‡ *Cf.* the speech of Metellus Macedonicus, *De prole augenda*, in Suet., Aug., 89; Aul. Gell., i. 6.

150–140 B.C. and retentive intellect, undazzled by the temptations of riches and self-indulgence, he had exercised his natural gifts from youth upwards in study and discussion. At once the friend and the favourite pupil of Polybius, that great thinker had opened to him his whole store of historical wisdom and experience. He had learnt to detect all the ravages of imperialism: he had marked how pride and cupidity, the thirst for pleasure, the decay of wedlock and all the passions of the commercial era, together with the policy of aggression which was its natural outcome, had ruined the old military power of Rome, broken down the old harmony of the classes, and endangered the peace and security of the home government, infesting the metropolis of Empire with the same ominous symptoms of anarchy and misrule which had hastened the doom of the ancient Greek Republics. Yet since he was one of the few able active and public-spirited survivors among a degenerate nobility, and the only skilful and competent general of his generation, Scipio was fated to carry out the most difficult and brutal enterprises of the savage imperialism of his age which had entombed the reputations of his less scrupulous colleagues; it was Scipio who completed the destruction of Carthage, and eventually, after years of warfare, was sent out to Spain to capture Numantia. But was it possible to work single-handed against the sweep of the stream? The pupil of Polybius had for ever in his ears the noise of the falls towards which the current was setting; but he knew—for he steered by a higher wisdom than that of Rome—that no pilot could guide his ship upstream against the swirling rapids of the river of history.*

Scipio Æmilianus and Polybius.

Scipio saw further than his fellows; yet he was only the child of his time. All those who cherished a grudge against their own generation—the miserable proletariat, the debt-laden landowners, the ancient and impoverished nobility, the reactionary conservatives who deplored the great changes that had been accomplished, and the uncompromising revolutionaries who deplored that they were still but half accomplished—all shared, in their various measures, in the same tragedy and contradiction. None of them could look forward to the compensations in store for the troubles of the present. None of them detected that, just because they were plunged for the moment into a common misery, the people of Italy would meet and mingle, in all the cities of the peninsula, and

The education of empire-builders.

* *Cf.* Meyer, U. G. G., 22.

above all in the capital, to forget the traditions and the dialects of their country homes in the ambition to gain a new country and a new prosperity—that the genius of Rome would exchange the obstinate prejudices, the blundering ignorance and debasing superstitions of its origin for the Hellenic curiosity which penetrates, by patient and methodical investigation, into the very heart of life. Without this education in method which she learnt from the Greeks, Rome would never have produced the untiring Empire-builders, architects overseers and workmen, of the next generation; but the contemporaries of Scipio Æmilianus saw only the dissolution of the ancient order, the disorganisation of the army, the encroachment of poverty; and, looming over the imperial city like a full charged thunder-cloud, the most feared and fearful calamity in a nation's annals, the war of Class against Class. 150–140 B.C.

CHAPTER III

THE GRACCHI AND THE NEW ITALY *

Tiberius Gracchus and the crisis in Italian agriculture—The essentially conservative idea of his Land law—The opposition goads him into a democratic and revolutionary agitation—Death of Tiberius—Progress in the cultivation of the olive and vine—Caius Gracchus: his character, education, and early career—His scheme of reform—The Judicial law, the Asiatic law, the Corn law, the Road law—His second tribuneship; scheme against over population; scheme for Italian franchise—Unpopularity of these proposals—Death of Caius Gracchus—The Pergamene bequest and auction—Increase of luxury and the expenses of living—Spread of the commercial spirit—Growth of Eastern trade—Middle-class education and ambitions—Break up of the Roman and Italian aristocracy—Formation of an Italian *bourgeoisie*—Military weakness of Rome—Pause in her conquests—Land law of Thorius and its importance—the Jugurthine War reveals the corruption of the aristocracy—First outbreak of democratic spirit—Marius made Consul—The new enemies on the frontiers: Mithridates and the Cimbri and Teutones—Defeat of the aristocratic generals by the Cimbri—Marius re-elected Consul—His great military reforms—Victories against the Cimbri—Power of the democratic party and humiliation of the nobility.

MORE than a century was to pass before the issue could finally be decided, but the opening skirmishes of the great battle came more quickly than men thought. Tiberius and Caius Gracchus were the first to raise the banner of the democracy. It was these two brothers, nephews of the great Africanus, near connections of Scipio Æmilianus, last representatives of one of the most historic Roman families, who first forced the problem of poverty upon the attention of the Republic.

Tiberius Gracchus and his circle.

Tiberius Gracchus had been brought up in his father's house

* For the original authorities for the period dealt with in the following chapter see *Sources for Roman History, B.C.* 133–70, collected and arranged by A. H. J. Greenidge and A. M. Clay (Oxford, 1903). The years 133–104 are fully described in the first and only volume of *A History of Rome during the later Republic and early Principate*, by A. H. J. Greenidge (London, 1905), whose early death is deeply deplored by all students of Roman history.

under the most distinguished Greek philosophers of the day. 133 B.C.
He was familiar from boyhood with discussions on the difficulties that beset the Roman State. He had heard Rome's most notable statesmen lamenting the symptoms of social and military decadence, and crying out for some reform which would avert the impending chaos. What disquieted them most of all was the wholesale disappearance of the country population upon which the army relied for its recruits. Yet they had failed to probe the true nature of the disease, and their remedies were the drugs of the old opportunist quackery. Hitherto at Rome, government had never failed to cope with the unrest of the proletariat; a paternal Senate had always successfully intervened with the usual palliatives; it had distributed lands or abolished debts or founded colonies.* Men had grown up in the belief that it is the business of the State to protect the poor; they were confirmed in it by a conviction, equally universal and equally deep-rooted, that the sole and sufficient means of exercising this protection was by way of legislation.

Early career of Tiberius.

Such was the birthright of ideas with which Tiberius entered upon life. The experience of early manhood deepened the impressions of his youth. He served in the Spanish War, a costly and inglorious campaign which lasted twenty years, 153–133 B.C. and almost reduced Rome to bankruptcy;† and, a few years later, witnessed the great slave revolt in Sicily, which the 139–132 B.C. government had real difficulty in suppressing. Thus on all sides he was confronted with the rapid degeneration of the army. He was young and sanguine, all aflame with an enthusiasm unquenched as yet by any continuous contact with affairs. He made up his mind to deal simultaneously with the two great problems before him, the distress at Rome and the decay of the army, to and do so by reviving the long-forgotten agrarian agitation.

Tiberius agrarian policy.

His idea was a very simple one. The Roman State had in time past been the landlord of large public estates all over Italy, particularly in the south of the Peninsula. These estates had for many years been held on lease or, in some cases, merely occupied by wealthy proprietors from among the Roman aristocracy. But the State had never resigned its original rights, and might legitimately at any time see fit to enforce them. If all the State lands were cut up into small holdings, and the distressed poor of Rome and Latium settled upon them as peasant proprietors, the whole military problem would be solved at a stroke. The dying country towns of Italy would

* Duruy, H. R., ii. 393. † Nitzsch, G. V., 294.

133 B.C. be infused with fresh life: and the agricultural districts round them, passing again under cultivation by this new yeoman class, would once more send their sturdy tale of recruits to the Roman legions.*

His Land Bill. The enthusiasm awakened by this startling panacea carried Tiberius to the Tribuneship for the year 133.† He immediately brought forward a Land Bill, drawn up for him by two Greek experts, Blossius of Cumæ, and Diophanes of Mitylene.‡ It provided that no Roman citizen should possess more than 500 acres of public land, with 250 acres for each of his sons up to a possible maximum of another 500 acres.§ The Latins and Italians were to be deprived of all public land that had not been formally assigned to them, whether they held it by purchase or merely by occupation.‖ Roman citizens in occupation of public lands, who were mostly men of large means, were to receive a money compensation for the improvements made ¶; the Latins and allies, whose holdings were all on a more moderate scale, were to be compensated by being allowed to take part with the distressed poor of Rome in the new distribution of estates.** The new Roman settlers were to pay a small annual rental to the State, and the lands made over to them were to be inalienable. Three magistrates chosen every year by the people in the Assembly of the Tribes were to distribute the estates and to examine into all cases of disputed ownership.††

* Sicul. Flac. de Cond. Agr., p. 136–7.

† Lange, R. A., iii. 7; Plut., Tib. Gr., 9; *cf.* C. I. L., i. 551.

‡ Plut., Tib. Gr., 8. § C. I. L., i. p. 87.

‖ This clause is not mentioned in any of the authorities, but it seems necessary in order to explain a statement of Appian, B.C., i. 18. He declares that the Latins and allies objected to being asked to produce the documents to prove that they had bought or been assigned their lands, and that in many cases the lands which they had occupied without legal right had been indistinguishably confused with land legitimately assigned to them.

¶ Appian, B. C., i. 11; Plut., Tib. Gr., 9; Duruy, H. R., ii. 395, n. 2.

** This supposition is again due to Appian, i. 18. He tells us that the Latin and Italian proprietors complained that they were given uncultivated in exchange for cultivated lands, which shows that they took part in the new distribution. On the assumption that small proprietors were more numerous among the Latins and Italians than among the Romans, the whole difficulty is explained; the simplicity of the explanation only helps to confirm it. Tiberius was an advocate of small holdings; he would hardly have done anything to injure the small Latin and Italian proprietors who provided so many good soldiers.

†† Appian, B. C., i. 9; Livy, p. 58. According to Livy, the power of deciding whether lands were public or private was given them in a second law; *cf.* Lange, R. A., iii. 13. Landucci (*Storia del diritto Romano*, Padua 1895) assigns it to the year 129, after the death of Tiberius.

The bill was very favourably received by the peasants and the small proprietors.* It appears also to have given great satisfaction to the clients, freemen and artisans, who made up the proletariat of the metropolis; they fell into the not unnatural mistake—often made by the poor before and since—of regarding the greed of the rich and the indifference of the government as a sufficient explanation of their own distress. A number of the enlightened conservatives were also inclined to welcome the bill.† Some of the strongest support came from Senators whose means did not permit them to live up to the new standard of the times, who secretly rejoiced at the contemplated spoliation of the proprietors of huge pastoral estates. The landlords were thus attacked on two sides. They were an insignificant minority in the Senate, and they could not hope to defeat the bill in the Comitia. In their dilemma they resorted to an ingenious manœuvre. They induced a colleague of Tiberius to interpose his tribunician veto, thus dividing the democratic forces and enrolling against the champion of social reform all the ancient and almost religious associations of the great popular office. But Rome had of late years grown familiar with methods of turbulence; and this rather despicable stratagem provoked an outbreak even against the hitherto inviolate authority of the Tribunes Excitement rose high on both sides. The impetuous Tiberius, after vainly trying to break down the obstinacy of his colleague, called upon the people to deprive him of his office. This was a new and quite unconstitutional demand. But the people were now thoroughly exasperated; they voted his deposition, and forthwith passed the bill.

133 B.C.

Reception of the bill.

On this disorders broke out afresh. The landlords accused Tiberius of having violated the semi-religious authority of the Tribunate. Tiberius, seeing he had nothing more to hope from the rich, now frankly assumed the *rôle* of a demagogue: in a series of high-pitched and eloquent speeches he declared the will of the people to be the supreme authority in the Roman State.‡ At this juncture news came that Attalus, King of Pergamus, had died, bequeathing his kingdom to the Roman people. Tiberius immediately carried a bill decreeing that the treasure of Attalus was to be used to provide the poorest of the new settlers with the implements of husbandry, and that

Second campaign and murder of Tiberius.

* Appian, B. C., i. 14.
† Neumann, G. R. V., 166.
‡ Plut., Tib. Gr., 15; Val. Max., iii. 2, 17.

133 B.C. the people and not the Senate should take over the administration of the new province.* His enemies seized the long-sought opportunity. Putting the constitutional issue in the foreground they openly accused him of aspiring to the tyranny. It was a clever but dangerous manœuvre; for to threaten Tiberius with prosecution on a capital charge was to drive him in self-defence to seek re-election to the Tribuneship. It appears that for this end he put out a further programme of popular legislation.† But it was too late to hope for a peaceful settlement. Both parties came down to the Comitia suspicious of their opponents, and in a mood rather for violence than for voting. A small disturbance, which broke out, it seems, during the course of the elections, put the spark to the powder. A body of Senators, after failing to induce the Consul to proclaim a state of siege, rushed armed into the midst of the crowd, and killed Tiberius with a number of his friends.‡

Collapse of the movement.

Coercion too often seems justified by its results; and this well-timed resort to violence disposed as effectually of the followers as of their leader. The loss of Tiberius dispersed and discouraged the different sections of his party. Those of the enlightened conservatives who had sympathies for reform had been more and more disgusted as the agitation proceeded, and were now too frightened to recollect their previous opinions; while on the removal of their champion the people relapsed into helplessness. It was an ominous success. After long generations of orderly government, Rome woke up to the discovery that a faction which took the law into its own hands might emerge from the experiment, not only with impunity, but with added power and respect. Even Scipio Æmilianus, then engaged in the siege of Numantia, was glad to hear of the murder of his hot-headed young relative.

The administration of the Land Law.

Meanwhile the three commissioners, one of whom was Caius, the only brother of Tiberius, set to work upon their task. They conscientiously made their way through Cisalpine Gaul and the south of Italy, delimitating and distributing the public lands,§ and trying to revive the old yeoman class which only eighty years before had saved Italy from the invader.

* Plut., Tib. Gr., 14. † *Id.* 16.

‡ For the riot see the careful analysis of the sources in Meyer, U.G.G., 24 ff.

§ Bernabei in *Notizie degli Scavi*, March 1897; C. I. L., i. 552–6. A later inscription, C.I.L., i. 583, refers to the work of the commissioners in Cispadane Gaul.

But it was one of those difficult and complicated undertakings which cannot possibly be carried through without a certain measure of injustice. After the lapse of so many years the old Ager Publicus was not easy to identify. Many landlords, finding that their holdings were in excess of the legal amount, arranged fictitious sales;* others had spent large sums on improving the lands they had taken over; while in many cases the title-deeds and documents of sale were no longer to be found.† The moderate proprietors, who were still numerous among the Italians and allies, suffered particularly from these enquiries and cross-examinations. 133 B.C.

The change in Italian agriculture.

The dismay and uncertainty occasioned by the Commission were particularly inopportune at this moment because Italian cultivators, as we know from Pliny, were now just beginning to descry the latent possibilities of agricultural development.‡ Many of these impoverished proprietors were seriously attempting to discover more lucrative methods of cultivation. They had found it no longer possible to make a living on the old system by cultivating the vine and the olive for private use and growing corn for sale, and were now trying to grow no more corn than they needed for home consumption, and to place oil and wine upon the market. Oil and wine not only fetched a relatively higher price than corn, but were also more easy to transport to customers at a distance. Economic crises in fact, as some of our contemporaries need to be reminded, are always due to the same general cause—the incompatibility between old methods and new conditions. No mere legislative expedients, however well-meant and well-considered, can rescue a people from this difficulty. It can only be met by the slow, painful and unconscious labour of the nation itself, by a united effort to make the conditions of production correspond to the needs of each succeeding age, and to make these the basis of

* Appian, B. C., i. 18.

† Appian, B. C., i. 18. See the excellent book by Callegari, L. S. C., Padua 1896.

‡ I place the beginning of this transformation of rural Italy between 130 and 120 B.C., relying on the very important passage in Pliny, N. H. xiv. 14, 94. Pliny declares that it was in 121 that Rome first became aware, through the cheapness of wine, of the effect of the change in cultivation. Reckoning for the slow growth of the vine, the change must have begun in the previous decade. Pliny does not speak of the olive; but since, as we shall see, the olive was, together with the vine, the staple element in the new agriculture, and since, as early as Cato, there is evidence of the substitution of olives for wheat (Max Weber, R. A. G., 223), it is not unjustifiable to regard the two new forms of cultivation as contemporaneous.

133–123 B.C. a new and more harmonious civilisation. Unfortunately it was just when many of the Italian proprietors were engaged in this effort that they found themselves interrupted by impatient politicians, who were anxious to deprive them of their promising young vineyards for a compensation in broad acres of dreary-looking bog. This the Latins and allies not unnaturally resented, and they appealed to their old general Scipio Æmilianus to intervene in their interest. Scipio proposed to the Senate and also carried through the Comitia a law providing that where the public or private ownership of land was in dispute the decision should be withdrawn from the three commissioners and given to the Consuls.* It was not surprising that after this the commissioners found little to do. The Consuls, who nearly always belonged to the opposite party, allowed the disputed cases to remain unsettled and the administration of the law was thus gradually suspended.† Once only, in 125, the Consul Marcus Fulvius Flaccus, a member of the Agrarian Commission and a friend of Tiberius, tried once more to bring up the question. He proposed to grant the Latins and allies citizen rights‡ in compensation for the losses involved in the revision of the public lands; but his attempt met with no success.

Suspension of the Land Law.

Character and early career of Caius.

The abortive enterprise of Tiberius was taken up ten years later by his brother. Caius was far superior to Tiberius, both in character and intellect. At the time of Tiberius' assassination he was but twenty years old, but in the ten years that followed he had given his enervated contemporaries a shining example of active public service and of personal conduct. He had been a member of the Agrarian Commission, and had taken some part in the political struggle which followed the death of his brother, always seeking to defend his memory and his work. Later he had served in several campaigns and had held a Quæstorship in Sardinia. But nothing was more abhorrent to him than the life of the ordinary young Roman noble. So far from regarding his provincial position as providing an outlet for self-indulgence and an opportunity of enrichment, he had lived the life of the common soldiers, looking after their comforts and spending his money upon their welfare.§ Nor had his military responsibilities distracted him from wider interests. He was an ardent reader and had found time, as

* Lange, R. A., iii. 22. † Neumann, G. R. V., 215 and 216.
‡ Lange, R. A., iii. 26; Meyer, U. G. G., 17.
§ Aul., Gell., xv. 12.

Cicero tells us,* to perfect his oratorical style. Long hours of quiet reflection and the bitter memory of his brother's unavailing martyrdom gradually drove him to take up and remodel the broken policy of social reform. 133–123 B.C.

Like Tiberius, Caius was profoundly impressed with the necessity of saving at least a part of the ancient order. But the great Gracchan idea of Conservative social reform was to undergo the fate which has since befallen analogous projects under similar conditions. It was to become transmuted by the force of circumstances into a programme of the most far-reaching and revolutionary scope, a programme which so far from preserving all that was worth preserving in the heritage of the past, would have contributed most powerfully to hasten its dissolution. The fate of Tiberius and his schemes had demonstrated that it was useless to try to remedy the distress at Rome without first breaking down, or at least humiliating, the powerful faction of the great public landlords; that the attempt to make a new peasant class out of the Roman proletariat was too simple to be practicable, and did not, in reality, touch the root of the difficulty. Caius had himself had opportunities, as Commissioner, of observing the difficulties and injustices which were inevitably involved in any redistribution of the public land. Moreover, even granting that the new proprietors would be zealous in cultivating the lands assigned to them (which was by no means sure †), it would be no easy matter to re-endow these 400,000 Roman citizens, now rulers of an extensive Empire, with the sterling qualities of the old Roman spirit. The Roman of to-day was very different from his grandfather. The nation was by this time simply a small and exclusive oligarchy of landlords and traders, bankers and concession hunters, artisans, adventurers and loafers; the metropolis was peopled with a noisy, unprincipled and self-opinionated mob, thirsting for pleasure and excitement, for easy profits and quick returns. Such an oligarchy was the most intractable material for the reformer. To ask it for even the very smallest present sacrifice

Ideas of Caius.

* Cic., Brut., xxxiii. 125.

† We are unable to judge of the effects of the assignments made in accordance with the law of Tiberius. According to Livy, Per. 59–60, the number of Roman citizens, which in 130 was 318,823, rose in 124 to 394,726, an increase which Beloch (I. B., 82) attributes to the Gracchan Land Laws. But in B.A.W. 351 Beloch regards the second figure as a mistake, and prefers to read 294,736, in which case there would be a diminution. *Cf.* I. Blasel, *Die Motive der Gesetzgebung des C. Sempronius Gracchus*, Trieste 1878; Lange, R. A., iii. 27.

123 B.C. in return for the most sure and obvious future benefits, was to court a certain failure. No doubt it included within its ranks a number of people, particularly among the poorer classes, who were chafing at present conditions. But that was only because they could not satisfy their far from legitimate desires. Discontent and class hatred might induce them to give a vote in favour of reform; but they would certainly not be disposed to make an active display of their patriotism by returning to a life involving greater labour, greater honesty, and greater simplicity. Such were the ideas which caused Caius, during his long campaigns at a distance from Italy, entirely to transform the original projects of his brother.

His first programme.

When Caius returned from his last expedition to Sardinia and landed at Rome, he found a great and excited crowd awaiting him.* As the terror caused by the assassination of Tiberius gradually passed away from men's minds, the poorer classes had begun to look round for a champion and an avenger. The brother of the victim seemed marked out both by his qualities of character and the suspicions of the wealthy faction to be the man of their choice. This was the opportunity of which he had been dreaming. Carried away by the memory of his brother and the force of events, by the excitement of the people and the hostility of his enemies, above all by his own headstrong and passionate genius, Caius unfolded his long-meditated programme of reform. Some of the ideas in it were taken over, in an altered form, from his brother, and some were entirely his own; all of them were bold and original, and none erred on the side of safety. After an election in which a large number of country voters took part, he was elected Tribune of the people for the year 123.† His first attempt had for its object the isolation of the landlord party by depriving them of the support of their natural allies and dependents.‡ The capitalists and the Senators had always worked harmoniously together in filling their pockets at the expense of the State. But the capitalists had of late years been growing

* Diod., Sic., xxxiv. fr. 24. † Plut., C. Grac., 3.

‡ The order in which the bills of Caius were produced, and above all the question how they were distributed between his two tribuneships, have been greatly discussed, for Plut., C. Gr., 4–6, Appian, B. C., i. 21–23, Livy, Per. 60, Velleius, ii. 6, all give different accounts. See Callegari, L. S. C., 53 ff. The best solution is to follow Callegari in inferring the order of the laws from internal evidence. Caius prepared his proposals on a well thought-out plan, and the bills which were to lead up to his goal naturally preceded those which he regarded as his final object.

increasingly restless. It was too mortifying to their pride and their ambition, too constant a check upon their financial undertakings, that the administration of the law-courts and the army should be left permanently in the hands of the aristocrats, for whose debts and extravagances they were themselves the paymasters. Caius, taking up one of the ideas of Tiberius, proposed a *lex judiciaria*, providing that the permanent Commissions (*quaestiones perpetuae*), which tried accusations against Governors and other crimes of a political nature, were in future to be composed of knights instead of Senators, at the same time very probably extending their powers.* He was seconded by one of his colleagues, Manius Acilius Glabrio, who proposed a far-reaching measure, the *lex Acilia Repetundarum*, against the extortions of provincial Governors. These changes were distinctly in the interests of the rich financiers, who would henceforward be assured of the law-courts as a weapon against the Senators. But Caius went on to throw them a still more considerable bait. The kingdom of Pergamus, which Rome inherited ten years before, had after the suppression of one national rising become an integral part of the Roman Empire; it was now sorely in need of some permanent reorganisation. Reversing the precedent set by his father in Spain, Caius proposed to levy throughout the province of Asia, as it was now called, in addition to the ordinary customs and harbour dues, the Roman tax of one-tenth upon all produce, and a new tax on the *Scriptura* or farming out of public lands; and he stipulated that the collection of these taxes should be leased out, not to local capitalists as in Sicily, but at Rome, under the direction of the Censors, for the exclusive benefit of the Roman financiers. 123 B.C.

The full meaning of these arrangements was soon made clear. Caius hoped to use the great sums that the State was to draw from these leases, and from an increase in the custom dues on all objects of luxury imported from the East,† in buying the support of the poorer classes for his reforms. He intended to insure them once and for all against any repetition of the partial famines from which Rome, even in good years, was never entirely immune. He therefore proposed, in a *lex frumentaria*, that the provision of corn should become a State Caius' Corn Law.

* *Cf.* Liv., Epit. 60; App., B. C., i. 22; Florus, iii. 13; Tac., Ann. xii. 60; Diod. Sic. xxxiv. fr. 25; Plut., C. Gr., 5. On the divergences between these texts and possible reconciliations, see Callegari L. S. C., 104 ff.

† Velleius, ii. 6.

123 B.C. obligation, and that the Government should provide Rome with wheat by selling it at the ridiculously low price of [2 gallons.] 6⅓ asses the modius.* He may also have thought that this wholesale purchase of wheat throughout Italy would be profitable to the owners of land, and that the construction of enormous granaries at Rome would bring work to contractors and labourers.† Nor was this all. For the benefit of the peasants and the city poor he proposed to put the laws of Tiberius again into force, and to restore to the three Commissioners by a new Land Law the power of deciding whether a piece of land were public or private property.‡ To this he added, following out, we may suppose, one of his brother's ideas, a *lex militaris*, fixing seventeen as the lowest age for enrolment in the army, and decreeing that the soldiers should be clothed at the expense of the Treasury.§ Finally, in a *lex viaria*, he produced a big scheme for the construction of new roads in different parts of Italy, more particularly in the south, thus at once giving work to contractors and workmen, and facilitating the sale of agricultural produce.

Caius' activity in administration.

By thus appealing immediately and directly to his electors with such an interesting and hopeful selection of schemes, some of them agreeable to the rich financiers, others to the contractors, others to the poorer citizens and land-holders, by making himself, in other words, the central figure in a huge coalition of different groups and interests, Caius might easily have carried through every item on his programme, and become the most powerful and popular, as he was already the busiest, man in Rome.‖ For indeed he spared no pains in the promotion of his task. His unfailing energy and power of work formed a strange contrast to the indolence of the average Roman noble of his day. Not satisfied with merely sketching the outlines of a great scheme of policy, he attended personally to every detail in its execution. He signed the contracts and watched over the construction of the granaries in Rome and the roads all over Italy; he had the roads laid out on a new and improved scale, and provided them for the first time on record with milestones. His house, in which he worked,

* App., B. C., i. 21; Liv., Per. 60; Plut., C. Gr., 5 (according to whom only the poor were to benefit by the arrangement).

† App., B. C., i. 23.

‡ This is a conclusion from a passage of Livy (Per. 60) where the *lex Agraria* of Caius is declared to be identical with that of Tiberius. *Cf.* Neumann, G. R. V., 236; Callegari, L. S. C., 80 ff.

§ Plut., C. Gr., 5.

‖ Diod. Sic., xxxiv. fr. 25.

as at a Government Office, from morning till night, became the resort of contractors and labourers and applicants for employment, as well as of all the intellect of Rome.* He had, in fact, adopted a policy for the encouragement of trade and industry which might have given the democratic party its marching orders for the whole of the next century. But, by the strangest of delusions, Caius imagined that this policy was to take him in an entirely opposite direction, to the partial if not complete restoration of Roman society to its ancestral and primitive conditions. 122 B.C.

On his re-election, by a large majority, to the tribuneship in the following year, he advanced to a still more novel proposal. Owing to the influx of artisans, traders, adventurers, and professional men of all kinds into Rome, very serious inconveniences had resulted. The supply of provisions had become a grave problem; the price of food and accommodation was continually rising and the condition of the people was increasingly wretched. Meanwhile all over the rest of Italy there was a continual exodus from the towns and the country districts.† The new Corn Law, so far from remedying, had only intensified the difficulty; moreover it was a serious charge upon the State Treasury, which was already sufficiently depleted by the Spanish War. Rome was suffering, in fact, from over-population. What was needed was to induce a certain number of financiers and merchants to establish themselves in other towns, drawing some of the needy metropolitan proletariat after them. Caius fixed his eyes on three points of the Mediterranean coast: Squillace, Taranto, and Carthage. Squillace was already a custom-house for Asiatic imports. Taranto had long been famous for its commerce and its wealth. Surely the Roman merchants who traded with Greece, Macedonia, and the East would live far more conveniently at Taranto and Squillace, re-named Neptunia and Minervia, than at Rome. As for Carthage, her commerce had, it is true, been swallowed up by Rome, but Roman traders who did business with Africa would no doubt find it profitable to live there; as a matter of fact, a considerable number of them had already established themselves at Cirta. The old Carthage seemed a natural site for the creation of a new Roman town, to bear the appropriate name of Junonia. Caius proposed therefore to send out colonising expeditions to Squillace, Taranto and

Caius' Colonial laws.

[Scylletium.]

* Plut., C. Gr., 6.

† *Cf.* Sic. Flac., de cond. agr., i. p. 136–7.

122 B.C. Carthage, composed, not of the usual indigent settler class, but of well-to-do people,* traders or capitalists, who were to be bribed with the promise of large concessions of land.

The Italian franchise.

These bills were also passed, although not it appears without difficulty: for any attempt to reduce the population of Rome was certain to clash with a good many interests. Caius, blindly self-confident after his previous successes, now ventured upon his master stroke—the supreme idea which he had meditated from the first. He proposed to take up the suggestion of Marcus Fulvius Flaccus, and confer the rights of Roman citizenship upon all the Italians.† His object was as simple as it was revolutionary—to make the Roman Empire into an Italian Empire, by granting the entire population of the peninsula a share in the benefits and responsibilities of power. The Italians were more numerous and less debased than the population of the metropolis. The descendants of the yeomen who had saved Italy from the African were to be called to the more difficult work of governing what they had conquered. Such was the far-reaching idea of Caius. Rome was to be the head of a vigorous Italian nation, and the vast fabric of Empire was henceforth to rest, not upon a municipal oligarchy and a clique of corrupt financiers, but upon the vigorous manhood of the Italian countryside. The sleepy and forgotten towns which had once been centres of commerce and civilisation were to be restored to their old-time glories, and their citizens who had fled into the metropolis were to be drawn back to their old homes. The congestion which threatened the nerve centres of Empire would be removed at one stroke. The clear vision of Caius had pierced through the future to the greatest of all the problems in Roman history; but, with an illusion not uncommon among statesmen, he hoped to accomplish single-handed a task at which six generations of his successors were still destined to labour.

Caius' loss of popularity, and murder.

For indeed these magnificent ideas were still somewhat premature. The project of granting Roman citizenship to the Italians was to nobody's taste. It suited the poor as little as the rich. The proletariat was afraid that an increase in the number of citizens would lessen the profits to be derived from wars and elections, and diminish the opportunities for

* This salient point, which throws light on Caius' real idea and shows what he expected his colonies to become, is related by Plut. C. Gr., 9. Callegari, L. S. C., 99, has seized its importance.

† Velleius, ii. 6; App., B. C., i. 23; Plut., C. Gr., 5; Cic., Brut. xxvi. 99. The details of the proposal are obscure.

games and other public amusements.* The landlord faction was not slow to profit by its opportunity. Skilful manoeuvring soon made havoc of Caius' assured popularity. Some of the authorities assert that at the elections for 121 he was actually not re-elected; while according to others he had so small a majority that it was easy to falsify the votes and declare him defeated. Thus, at the end of his second tribunate, Caius was driven back into private life. He remained quietly in retirement until his enemies proposed to break up his Carthaginian colony, when, unable to hold back any longer, he summoned a meeting and attempted to speak. In the excitement that prevailed among both parties wild scenes took place. The enemies of Caius rushed to the Senate to demand the proclamation of a state of siege, and so misrepresented the situation that even the more moderate senators were frightened into repressive measures. A state of siege was hurriedly proclaimed, and the Consul, Lucius Opimius, seized his opportunity to cut down Caius and a number of his partisans in the streets. Thus perished one of the four founders of the Roman Empire, and perhaps the most far-seeing statesman Rome ever produced. 121 B.C.

The reformer was dead; but his reforms did not die with him. Their fate was indeed no less tragic than his own. They were applied as a remedy; but they acted as a poison. They were intended to preserve all that was best in old Roman society; but all that they did was to hasten its dissolution. The destruction of Carthage and Corinth had already worked serious havoc in Roman life, spreading luxury and ostentation among the upper classes, distaste for work among the lower, and wastefulness and intemperance in all ranks of society. But all previous records were eclipsed when Rome entered upon the heritage of the King of Pergamus. In the very year that Caius Gracchus died the vines planted ten years before gave a copious vintage, part of which was carried to Rome, barrels being opened in all the streets.† Nobles and capitalists and landlords of every class began to invest in slaves, thus swelling the slave trade to unprecedented dimensions.‡ The belongings of the King of Pergamus were brought to Rome to be sold by auction, and bid for by a crowd of excited connoisseurs; dispersed among the rich houses of Rome and Italy they diffused an extravagant taste for pictures and statues, Changes in Roman Society.

* Meyer, Orat. Rom., frag. (Tübingen, 1842) p. 201.
† Pliny, N. H., xiv. 96.
‡ We owe this important fact to Strabo, xiv. v, 2.

125–115 B.C. for goldsmiths' work and luxurious furniture.* As the upper classes at Rome and throughout Italy thus increased the burden of necessary expenses, they were ceaselessly tormented by the old spectre of debt. It is a problem which inevitably recurs whenever an ambitious plutocracy has grown up by the side of an old aristocracy, and is endeavouring to make money an adequate substitute for birth and breeding. There were a small number of old houses which had succeeded, thanks to careful management, in amassing large fortunes, amongst others the families of Pompeius, Metellus and Licinius Crassus.† But these were exceptions. On the whole the younger generation was vain and unprincipled, sometimes tempted to indulge a whim for art or science, nearly always unstable, thriftless and debauched. Meanwhile, the knights were growing rich on the spoils of the old kingdom of Pergamus. Caius with his law on Asiatic administration had done a novel and lucrative piece of business for the Roman capitalists and their friends; numerous syndicates were formed at Rome to farm the new taxes, and skilful financiers readily invested their capital. If Rome's military and commercial expansion seemed to have reached a natural limit, the financial side of Imperialism promised new outlets for her energies in the coming age.

Exodus and dispersion of the young country population.

In almost every middle-class family—and middle-class families were still numerous, though it is probable that their fertility decreased from generation to generation—there were children who were driven from home by the agricultural depression to make a living in the world. They found their way to a neighbouring town or to the capital, where they embarked on a commercial or professional career; or they enlisted, perforce or by choice, in the legions and moved about on the look-out for a favourable chance. Settlements of Italian traders spread rapidly throughout the Mediterranean basin; one was formed just about this time at Alexandria.‡ Many Italians emigrated to Asia, where they were attached to the great tax-collecting syndicates and devoted themselves to usury. Others engaged in the slave-trade, or in the supply of those Asiatic products which were now finding an ever widening market at Rome. In this way Delos, for instance, recovered all its old prosperity and became the home of rich merchants from Italy, Greece, Syria and Palestine. Sometimes the

* Pliny, N. H., xxxiii. xi. 148.
† *Cf.* Drümann, G. R., ii. 37 ff., iv. 70 ff., 318 ff.
‡ Homolle, B. C. H., viii., 127.

father of a country family, hoping that his son might rise above his class, sent him, regardless of expense, into some neighbouring town to study for the Roman Bar; if he made progress in his career he might some day secure the help of a rich and powerful patron, and find his way to high office in the State.* Thus the moderate proprietors and yeomen, who, in the days of Hannibal had kept a large part of the peninsula under cultivation, were gradually disappearing. All over Italy the smaller properties were being merged into huge estates; and the new landlords, anxious only to employ the cheapest form of labour, replaced the lazy and discontented free peasants who still remained with huge gangs of slaves imported from abroad. Thus the country population gradually streamed off to seek a fortune in the towns of Italy or in the provinces, or to rise to positions of authority at Rome among the exclusive nobility which still regarded the Empire as its own.† 125–115 B.C.

Scaurus and Marius.

As the aristocratic tradition decayed and the old-fashioned virtues succumbed to the temptations of wealth, new forces became visible in the welter of society. Two figures may be taken as characteristic of the age. It is just about this time that we first note the appearance of that familiar social phenomenon, the self-made man. Marcus Æmilius Scaurus, the son of a coal merchant in the equestrian order, is a good instance of his class. Education, a clever tongue, and a course of petty services to the oligarchy, aided by a skilful affectation of austerity and virtue, successfully carried him to high office. He reached his first magistracy in the year of the death of Caius Gracchus, of whom he had been a fierce and determined opponent. His next attempt was upon the Consulship, which he filled in the year 115.‡ Very different from Scaurus, but quite as typical of the age, was Caius Marius. Marius was a man after the old style, with a lively intelligence untrained by education, simple in his habits, yet ambitious and an untiring worker. Starting life as an obscure knight at Arpinum,§

* We know two cases of this sort: Sertorius (Plut., Sert. 2), and M. Aemilius Scaurus (Aurel. Victor, De Vir. Ill. lxxii. 1: Val. Max. iv. 4, 11; Drümann, G. R., ii. 18 ff). These are not two isolated cases, but typical of what went on generally.

† See in Drümann, G. R., the genealogical tables of the Metelli (ii. 6), the Domitii Ahenobarbi (iii. 12), the Julii (iii. 113), the Licinii Crassi (iv. 53), the Octavii (iv. 218).

‡ Drümann, G. R., ii. 18.

§ Madvig, K. P. S., 525, has shown that there is no need to follow many editors in correcting, *natus equestri loco* in Velleius ii. 11, into *natus agresti loco* to fit the later tradition that Marius was a peasant.

125–115 B.C. he seems at first to have been a tax-farmer by profession; though he soon gave this up to seek his fortune in the army and politics. He first made his mark at the siege of Numantia, and his military record brought him to the Tribuneship in 119, in which position, though without money or followers or family connections, he did not hesitate to criticise the aristocracy and the proletariat with a refreshing indifference to the susceptibilities of all parties.*

The new bourgeoisie.

In spite of their great difference of temperament the two men are good representatives of their class. They stand for the new Italian *bourgeoisie* formed out of the old local middle-class in the various districts of Italy, which was beginning to shake off its age-long subjection to the aristocracy, and to dream of exercising a greater influence in Italy and the Empire. This Italian *bourgeoisie* was the nucleus of the first real Italian nation in history. It came into existence through the operation of very much the same causes as have contributed, between 1848 and the present day, to the creation of that Italian *bourgeoisie* which is the nucleus of twentieth-century Italy. Such causes were the break-up of the old local and parochial system of life, the intermingling of the populations of the different districts, the emergence of Italy, under the changed conditions, as a single economic unit, the diffusion of the same culture and habits of mind over a large part of the upper and middle classes. People travelled easily from one city to another, and there were frequent inter-marriages between town and town. Intercourse of all sorts for personal or commercial reasons became common and usual. Latin drove out the local dialects and became the universal Italian language. The same customs, fashions and vices, the same training in Greek philosophy and Latin composition and oratory went the round of the Peninsula.

The new influences in foreign policy.

The efforts of the decadent aristocracy to stay its descent and of the new *bourgeoisie* to hasten its rise served to accelerate the changes in social conditions. In the disorder produced by this dislocation of the whole framework of society personal considerations became more and more paramount. Every kind of selfishness—family interest, party interest, class interest, client interest—ran riot in Italy. Military operations

According to Diod. Sic., xxxiv. 35, fr. 38, and Plut., Mar., 3 and 13, Marius came of an equestrian family. Madvig has adduced several arguments to show the greater likelihood of this tradition.

* Neumann, G. R. V., 261.

were suspended and the legions undermanned because the uncertainty of payment had discouraged recruiting. For the State Treasury, in spite of a temporary relief from the revenue of Asia, was soon depleted anew through the expenses involved by the corn-dole,* and by the military outlay incurred by Caius Gracchus. Similar influences were manifest in the field of foreign policy. With no army behind them to back up their action, Roman statesmen became timid, hesitating and inconsistent. Except where there appeared to be no possible alternative, no fresh annexations of territory were made. Independent and neighbouring States were no longer even carefully watched. Since she had become mistress of the kingdom of Pergamus, Rome had by means of a vast system of protectorates extended her power far into the interior of Asia Minor, incorporating under her suzerainty the Republics of Rhodes, Cyzicus and Heraclea, and the federations of the Republics of Lycia and Galatia.† But she had abstained from any interference with the large and powerful kingdom of Pontus, stretching to the east of these protectorates along the southern coastline of the Black Sea, which had been formed at the beginning of the third century B.C., during the decomposition of the Empire of Alexander, out of a medley of populations differing in language, customs and race, and was governed by the dynasty of the Mithridates, a family of Hellenised Persian nobles. In the west Rome had been forced in the interests of her ally Massilia, and to secure the line of communication between Italy and Spain, to undertake a war against Bituitus, King of the Arverni, who had succeeded in establishing a kind of Empire over Gaul, and was acknowledged as supreme by most of the Celtic peoples living between the Alps and the Rhine. Bituitus had been conquered and taken prisoner, and the supremacy of the Arverni broken down; but Rome had then stayed her hand. She had been satisfied with contracting alliances with the principal peoples of Gaul, amongst others the Aedui, and forming into a Roman province, under the name of Narbonese Gaul, the part of France that lies between the Alps and the Rhone. The Balearic Islands, too, had been annexed by one of the Metelli in 121. But Rome had practically given up undertaking campaigns against barbarous tribes on the frontiers, or even within the frontiers of her Empire. 125–115 B.C.

* Cic. De Off., ii., xxi. 72.
† Reinach, M. E., 86 ff.

121–111 B.C. Thus just at the time when the demands of the aristocracy and the middle-class were steadily increasing, one great supply of wealth was cut off. How were the new expenses of living to be met? The great landlords, for their part, did not hesitate to take action. Profiting by their sudden access of power after the murder of Caius, they carried through the Senate, the very year after his death, a law abolishing the inalienability of the lands assigned by the Commissioners. Two years after, in 119, the electors themselves decided on the repeal of the Gracchan Land Laws, enacting as a compensation that the sums brought in by the leasing of the public lands should be distributed among the people.*

Repeal of the Land Laws.

The law of Thorius, and the abolition of common land.

A still bolder step in the same direction was taken soon afterwards. A large number of people who had spent money on the cultivation of public lands were alarmed by the Gracchan revision of the leaseholds, and desirous of some definite reassurance. There were also a good many landlords who had run into debt owing to the general increase of expenditure, and were anxious to find new sources of revenue. Finally, a good many of the very people whom the Gracchi had settled on small holdings objected to the simple life of the country, and were ready to sell the lands that the Commissioners had assigned to them. A bill skilfully drafted in 111 by Spurius Thorius,† tribune of the people at the time, settled a number of the disputed questions in a manner satisfactory to all parties. All public land which the Commissioners had declared to be legitimately occupied, land, that is, up to five hundred acres for the head of a family and an equal amount for his sons, was declared private property outright, which meant that they were inscribed in the register and could be sold, given away, or bequeathed.‡ The same provision was made with regard to all public land which had been given in compensation

* App. B. C., i. 27. According to Mommsen this law, which Appian wrongly attributes to Spurius Thorius, belongs to the year 119. See C. I. L., i., p. 77.

† Neumann, G. R. V., 264 ff, and Karlowa, R. R. G., i. 433, appear to me, contrary to the opinion of Mommsen, to have successfully identified this as the real law of Spurius Thorius. Ciccotti, T. S., 194, whose suggestive remarks on the Gracchan Laws are worthy of study, follows Mommsen. This law, of which a short analysis is given in App. B. C., i, 27, is fortunately in greater part extant. The inscription, one of the most important documents for the social history of Rome, may be found in C. I. L., i., pp. 79–86, or in Bruns, *Fontes juris Romani antiqui* (Tübingen, 1860), pp. 16–35.

‡ Lex Thoria, i. 1. The best explanation of *pro vetere possessore* appears to be that of Mommsen, C. I. L., i,, p. 87.

for land taken away at the time of the revision of titles,* and to any land which had been broken up or distributed in consequence of the Gracchan laws.† Similar arrangements were made regarding all public land which had been occupied after the Gracchan laws, up to a limit of thirty acres, provided that they had been properly cultivated.‡ Moreover the jurisdiction of the Commissioners of the public land, which had been so annoying to the large landlords, was abolished, and their powers transferred to the ordinary magistrates, who were almost always chosen from amongst the hereditary land-holding aristocracy. Finally the benefits of the law were to apply not only to Roman citizens, but also to the Latins and allies.§ Furnished with these various provisions to suit all classes, the bill was easily passed into law. The public land, thus made into private property, immediately increased in value. Landlords who were in debt could sell estates of which they had hitherto only enjoyed the usufruct. Men who had begun to put capital into the soil felt their confidence revived, and business in land was again actively taken up. These were all, of course, very considerable improvements: but the reverse side of the medal must not be overlooked. The immediate effect of the law was to deprive the State Treasury, already none too full, of resources which, in the vicissitudes of past centuries, had always been relied upon for assistance. Enlightened men could not help seeing the law in its true colours, as an attack by private interests upon the patrimony of the State. It is likely enough that its authors would have accepted the description, Its more permanent results, however, nobody on either side was in a position to predict; as a matter of fact, they were considerable and all for the good. It broke down the last vestiges of the old Communism in land, and secured that practically the whole of Italy passed into private hands. It was an economic revolution very analogous to that which took place in European countries in the last century when all the property under Mortmain was sold to private owners. The law of Thorius is only one more instance of the rule that the work of historical characters must be judged by their motives and intentions rather than by the unsuspected consequences to which they so often give rise. 111 B.C.

Whilst a decadent aristocracy and a young and aspiring *bourgeoisie* were thus engaged in squandering the old domain

* Lex Thoria, i. 9.
† *Id.* i. 1.
‡ *Id.* i. 3.
§ *Id.* i. 14.

112 B.C.

The decay of the aristocracy.

of the Roman state in Italy, the aristocracy was displaying the same careless impatience with a still more valuable heritage, the prestige of Rome throughout the world. There is perhaps no class of men in the world more blind to all moral distinctions than an aristocracy in its declining years, when, straitened in its means and jealous of an intruding plutocracy, it is attempting to combine the hereditary privileges of its position with a rising standard of luxury and self-indulgence. The high fashionable society of Rome produced its full share of scandals. There were judges who had been openly bribed, governors who had committed atrocious exactions, senators who had filched lands belonging to the State. One instance will suffice to introduce us to a notable name. Lucius Cornelius Sulla, the last descendent of a distinguished but degenerate family, was a man of both intelligence and culture; but he passed his time amidst actors, dancers, singers and buffoons, and had repaired the fortunes of his family by angling for the inheritance of a Greek courtezan.* But aristocracies, like empires, continue to command respect long after their true greatness has passed away. Romans little realised how, during the twenty years which preceded the Gracchi, self-indulgence and corruption, speculation and cynicism had eaten out the very heart of her aristocracy. In 112 a series of unexpected incidents suddenly brought home to them the full extent of the evil.

The Jugurthine scandal.

Micipsa, King of Numidia, had died in 118, leaving as regent, and guardian of his two legitimate sons, a bastard son called Jugurtha. Jugurtha was both crafty and ambitious. He soon made away with one of his brothers and entered into a war with the other, provoking disturbances in which the Roman government was forced to intervene. It then appeared that the State which had repulsed Hannibal and laid Carthage in ashes had grown too old and powerless to meet a chieftain of nomadic and barbarous tribes. Jugurtha bought over the Commissioners sent out to keep watch over his intrigues, the senators charged with their prosecution, and the generals who were to meet him in battle. He did this so successfully that there was great difficulty in finding a single man among the nobility who would wage war against him in earnest, instead of using him merely as a milch cow; and it was only after much delay that an efficient commander was discovered in Metellus. This shameful scandal was more than the Roman electorate would tolerate. The democratic passions which had

* Plut., Sulla, 1–2.

been smouldering for a generation among the middle classes, the proletariat and the capitalists, flared up in a moment to seize and consume all that still survived of the old respect for the aristocracy. The agitation which ensued marks the climax of the changes brought about by the unrest of the time: by the ambitions of the rising generation, by the ideas of the philosophers, by the diffusion and vulgarisation of the Stoic doctrine of universal equality. It culminated in the election campaign of 107, when Marius was carried triumphantly to the Consulship. 107 B.C.

Marius' election to the consulship.

Marius had spent the last few years as praetor and propraetor in Spain, and had gained wealth and distinction by a fortunate marriage with the sister of a certain Caius Julius Cæsar, a man of noble but not particularly illustrious family,* which led to his adoption into the patrician house of the Julii. He was at that time serving as legate in the army of Metellus in Africa, where he was far from contented. The young aristocrats who lorded it in the army lost no occasion of humiliating the *bourgeois* tax-farmer who had risen from the ranks to be second in command.† Exasperated by his experiences in camp, and emboldened by the state of public opinion in Italy, Marius demanded leave of the Commander-in-Chief to go to Rome as a candidate for the Consulship in 107. Metellus, who was an honest man, but shared the aristocratic prejudices of those about him, did his best to discourage him and prevent his departure. But Marius took offence at his patronage and high words were exchanged between the Consul and his legate. This was the making of Marius' fortune. When the public at Rome heard that Metellus was unwilling to permit a soldier with such a record to stand for election simply because he was not an aristocrat, Marius became the idol of the artisans and the peasants, the middle class and the financiers,‡ and his election was henceforth assured.

Marius' Army Reform.

Once installed in office he immediately demanded, and of course obtained, the command which had been entrusted to Metellus. But before leaving for Africa he took occasion to make a great change in the conditions of military service. He extended the levy to poor men who were not inscribed in any of the five classes of landowners, and who according to the ancient constitution had no right to bear arms.§ The

* Pauly, R. E., iv., 1557.
† Diod. Sic. xxxiv., 35–38. ‡ Sall, B. J., 73.
§ Sall, B. J., 86, Aul. Gell., xvi., x. 14; Val. Max., ii., 3, 1.

107 B.C. merchants, tax-farmers and rich landowners, who made up the five classes, had no longer either the aptitude or the taste for military service. For the last thirty years enlightened statesmen had felt the urgent need for the re-modelling of the army, and military reform had of course been in the forefront of the Gracchan programme. Marius did not shrink from the most radical measures, or from methods even more decisive and revolutionary than those of Caius Gracchus himself. Instead of labouring at difficult and doubtful schemes for reviving the strength of the old yeoman class, which was the original recruiting ground for the legions, he raised his levies from amongst the poor in town and country, probably without the least suspicion of all the changes that this innovation would entail in the political and military organisation of Rome.* Then he set out with confidence on his African campaign.

Defeat of Jugurtha.

With the help of Bocchus, King of Mauretania, and his quæstor Sulla, Marius at length succeeded in bringing Jugurtha to bay. The campaign was rendered memorable by the exploits of Sulla, who gave proofs of a physical energy and a fertility of diplomatic resource which had not been suspected in a young man of such dissolute antecedents. Jugurtha was finally carried to Rome in chains. Part of his kingdom was added to the province of Africa; of the rest, some was given to Bocchus and some to a brother of Jugurtha. But the defeat of this petty chieftain had cost seven years of negotiations

112-106 B.C. and war, a serious blow to the prestige of a great Empire; and when it had been secured, Italy was so enfeebled by the continuance of social disorder that she seemed quite unfit to meet the new and unexpected dangers which confronted her shortly afterwards.

Mithridates in the Crimea.

In that kingdom of Pontus, which had hitherto remained almost outside the ken of Roman statesmen, Mithridates Eupator, a young sovereign of great intelligence and ambition, had, in 107, succeeded to the throne of his fathers. Aided by Diophantes, a skilful Greek from Sinope, Mithridates had within a very few years won a great reputation throughout the Orient as the champion of Greek civilisation against the forces of barbarism. He had saved the Greek colonies in the Black Sea from the domination of the Scythians and had incorporated the Crimea in his dominions. Encouraged by

* *Cf.* for this change E. Baroni, *I grandi capitani sino alla Rivoluzione Francese*, Turin, 1898, Annibale, 32 ff.

these successes, he had then attempted to dominate all the eastern basin of the Black Sea and to extend the borders of the old kingdom of Pontus south-eastward to the Euphrates. He had entered into relations with the barbarous populations of Sarmatians and Bastarni, who were wandering between the Danube and the Dnieper, with the Gallic tribes which had settled in the valley of the Danube, and with the Thracians and Illyrians.* The Scythian kings who had been expelled from the Crimea fled to Rome for aid, and Rome was just beginning to take an interest in her dangerous Eastern neighbour † when she was faced with far more serious trouble almost at her gates. 105 B.C.

The Cimbri and the Paphlagonian embassy.

In the year 105 the pro-Consul Quintus Servilius Cæpio and the Consul Cneius Manlius Maximus, both members of the old aristocracy, were sent to repel an invasion of the Cimbri and Teutones, two German tribes who had been attracted into Gaul by the destruction of the Empire of the Arverni, and who, having swept through Gaul, were now advancing on Italy. But the two Roman generals were old personal enemies, and they had not been able, even in the presence of the common foe, to forget their own dissensions; thus the campaign had ended in a disastrous defeat. It was about this time, apparently in the spring of 104, that Mithridates, who had for some time past been negotiating an alliance with the King of Bithynia, invaded Paphlagonia and expelled its native princes. The Paphlagonians, who were under the suzerainty of the Republic, appealed to Rome for assistance. Mithridates, taught by Jugurtha, sent ambassadors to the metropolis to corrupt the Senate.‡ But at Rome the democratic party was now all powerful. The disgust inspired by the African scandals, the successes of their popular hero in the war against Jugurtha, the defeat of the aristocratic generals in the campaign against the Cimbri, had all weakened the position of the Senate. The democracy was showering affronts and accusations upon the historic nobility of Rome, and had already compelled it to accept, after an interval of only three years, the re-election of Marius to the Consulship, with the prospect of conducting the Cimbric campaign. Thus the ambassadors of Mithridates arriving gifts in hand, were received with hostile popular demonstrations directed by the tribune and demagogue Lucius Appuleius Saturninus; § and the Senate was forced to pacify the people by

* Reinach, M. E., 57 ff.
† *Id.* 95.
‡ *Id.* 95 and 96.
§ Niccolini in S. I. F. C., v. 476.

104-102 B.C. sending a diplomatic mission to the east, and charging the prætor Antonius to keep watch over the province of Cilicia. But Antonius, under the influence of gold from Pontus, not only refrained from forcing Mithridates and Nicomedes to evacuate Paphlagonia, but even allowed them to occupy Galatia.*

Marius' preparations against the Cimbri.

Fortunately, thanks to Marius, the situation in the north had meanwhile improved. The Cimbri and the Teutones, instead of marching into Italy after the defeat of the two Consuls retired to Gaul and Spain. Marius had therefore time to complete his military reforms. He abolished the maniple formation, and did away at the same time with the distinction between the legions of Roman citizens and the cohorts of allies, organising the legions in the same way as the Italian contingents, in cohorts which were more compact, heavier and more uniform than the maniples, and could therefore be composed of soldiers of less individual efficiency, recruited from amongst the dregs of the population. He also perfected the equipment, the pilum and the transport, and devoted himself actively to training his new levies.

Growing influence of the popular party.

While he was thus preparing for his campaign, the popular party at Rome was going from success to success. Disregarding the hostility of the aristocracy and in the face of every precedent, it elected Marius to the Consulship for several successive years. It placed more rigorous checks upon the dishonesty of provincial governors and threw open to popular election the colleges of the priests, which had hitherto been filled up by selection from amongst a small number of noble families. All the ambitious politicians of the day had joined its ranks; the rich financiers looked kindly upon it, and there were even many moderate Conservatives who gave benevolent consideration to its programme of social and political reform. It was an innocent and almost fashionable diversion to be in favour of Land Bills which were always being proposed and never being put into execution.† Many people began to hope that the relief of their unhappy country would come from the party which had inherited the traditions of the Gracchi.

* Reinach, M. E., 97.

† Neumann, G. R. V., 394-412. See the speech on the Land Bill of Philippus in 104 in Cic. de Off. ii. xxi., 73. See also Busolt, N. J. P. P. 141 and 321 ff., who shows that the fragments of Diodorus relating to the Gracchi, which are full of sympathy for their Land Laws but strongly opposed to their political reforms, are derived, probably through Posidonius, from Rutilius Rufus, a distinguished and honourable Conservative at the beginning of the first century.

These expectations were soon strikingly confirmed by the triumphs of its champion. Marius crushed and annihilated the Barbarians in two signal victories, at Aix in 102, and at Campi Raudi (near Vercelli) in the following year, and thus finally succeeded in disembarrassing the Empire of these predatory hordes. On his return to Rome he was saluted with the title of the Third Founder of the City after Romulus and Camillus.

102 B.C.

[Aquæ Sextiæ.]

CHAPTER IV

MARIUS AND THE GREAT PROLETARIAN RISING OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Impoverishment, discontent, and moral disorder in Italy at the time of Marius' return from the Cimbric war—Pecuniary difficulties in all classes; concentration of wealth; power of capitalists; weakness of government; beginning of rivalry between the historic nobility and the rich *bourgeois* financiers—The intellectual proletariat—Growth of the franchise agitation among the Italians; its causes—Growing turbulence of the democratic party at Rome—Ambitions of Marius; his coalition with the demagogues—The sixth Consulship of Marius, and the revolution of Saturninus—Fall of Marius and return of the aristocrats to power—Spirited foreign policy—Growing hostility between nobility and capitalists—The greatest judicial scandal in Roman history: the trial of Rutilius Rufus—Livius Drusus; his bills and franchise proposal—Capitalist opposition; assassination of Drusus—Insurrection of the Italians; the Senate makes partial concessions to the insurgents—Outbreak of the Mithridatic war—Economic crisis in Italy; agitation for the diffusion of Italians through the thirty-five tribes—Mithridates invades Asia—Proletarian revolt against the Italian plutocracy; massacre of resident Italians—The Senate entrusts Sulla with the Mithridatic campaign—Revolution of Marius and Sulpicius Rufus.

The coming upheaval.

ITALY had long been living in the apprehension of a great social upheaval. At the time which we have now reached, just a hundred years before Christ, the day of reckoning was felt at last to be at hand. Yet it would be a mistake to imagine that decadence and ruin filled the whole of the picture. Even amid the chaos of society and politics there were promising symptoms of intellectual advance. The diffusion of Greek philosophy, the progress of education and the increase of wealth had made men more sensible of the severity of the old legal code, and the stupid and barbarous superstitions which it embodied. The last vestiges of human sacrifice disappeared within a few years of this date.* The decrees of the Prætors marked a continuous

Signs of progress.

* The decree was passed in 97 (Pliny, N. H., xxx. 1, 12.)

development of the principles of equity: Roman law, as we know it, began gradually to take shape. It was about this time for instance, that the *lex Aebutia* swept away the cumbrous and pedantic machinery of the so-called *legis actiones*, replacing it by a more flexible and rational procedure better suited to a business age.* Both in literature and art there was evidence of considerable activity. Nobles and merchants began to build handsome palaces in the metropolis, using marbles from Hymettus,† and other exotic materials in place of the familiar Italian travertine. Literary dilettantism became a prevailing fashion: distinguished senators dabbled in history and philosophy, and scribbled verses both in Latin and in Greek. There were orators to be heard in the Forum, such as Antonius and Licinius Crassus, who had elaborated their style with care upon Greek models.‡ The arts of Greece and Asia found an ever widening circle of admirers, and Greek sculptors and painters, among them even a woman, Iaia of Cyzicus,§ were employed in increasing numbers by wealthy patrons in the capital. 100 B.C.

Yet in whichever direction we look, whether at political or social conditions or at the sphere of individual morality, we see signs of encroaching disorder and decay. The rise in the standard of living was forcing the old aristocracy into strange shifts for a livelihood: some kept afloat by peculation or extortion or the simpler expedient of debt;‖ others by acquaintance or marriage connection, wholly regardless of appearances, with wealthy tax-farmers or financiers. Many of the country proprietors studied agriculture in the writings of the Greeks, or in the Carthaginian treatise of Mago, which had been translated by order of the Senate. They borrowed a little capital, planted olives and vineyards, and tried to improve their methods of cultivation. But want of experience, together with difficulties of transport, imperfect organisation, and the high rate of interest, generally ended by bringing failure both upon the experiments and those that made them.¶ Moreover, the law

Impoverishment of the aristocracy and landowners.

* Bonfante, D. R., 493. † Pliny, N. H., xxxvi. 3, 7.
‡ Cic., De Oratore, i., iv. 14. § Brunn, G. G. K., ii. 394.
‖ Cic., De Off., ii., xiv. 50. Drümann, G. R., iv. 6, and 120, give instances.
¶ Varro, R. R., i. 8, 1, says that in his time, that is at a period when, as we shall see, vines were a great source of wealth to Italy, there were many people who declared that vine-growing was not remunerative. This was an opinion which must certainly have survived from the disappointments suffered by the first cultivators, who attempted vine-growing on a large scale.

100 B.C. of Spurius Thorius, by converting so large a part of the public land into private property, had encouraged landlords to be extravagant, and thus, after a burst of short-lived prosperity, ended by leaving them worse off than before.

The new education and its products.

These tendencies were only accentuated by the spread of education. In the metropolis and in the Latin and allied towns new schools of rhetoric were opening their doors to train young Italians in a common language and a national oratory;* and Latin gained ground daily, both as a spoken and a written language, upon the Sabellian and Oscan dialects of the countryside.† But this new and coveted culture was as yet out of touch with the life of the community. Many of the young advocates turned out by the schools found neither patrons to befriend them, nor clients to plead for; and emigration into the provinces became a tempting and often a necessary expedient. Many Italians made fortunes in the slave trade, which was now largely in the hands of the pirates; for the few slaves captured in war and trade with the barbarians no longer sufficed for the increasing demand.‡ Delos became a huge slave market for the whole of the Mediterranean basin; and many a young Italian fresh from school sold his manuscripts of Homer and Plato to make a living as a buccaneer. Others found their way into Egypt, or oftener still to the new province of Asia, where, thanks to the arrangements of Caius Gracchus, the exploitation of the old kingdom of Pergamus had proved immensely profitable. The tax-farmers, all of them either Romans or Italians, enjoyed the open patronage of the governors in their systematic pillage of the province. There were few devices either of fraud or violence which their ingenuity left untried. They would force the natives into debt in order to pay the taxes, and thus eventually despoil them of all their goods: while, by agreement with their allies the pirates, they laid hands on every unfortunate prisoner who was available for sale into Italy. No wonder that Asia came to be regarded as a happy hunting ground for millionaires.

The new line of cleavage.

But there were far more, of course, who went under, and the glaring contrast between the ill-gotten gains of the few and the penury of the many did much to accentuate the general unrest. A new line of cleavage appeared in Italian society.

* Suet., de clar. rh., 1 and 2. Cic. Brut. xlvi. 169. See also Cic. de Orat. i. 4.

† Budinnskzi, *die Ausbreitung der lateinischen Sprache*, 22–26.

‡ Strabo, xiv. 5, 2.

On the one side was the great host of men who had lost all they had to lose in the world, the bankrupt traders and ruined land-owners who were to be found in every corner of Italy; on the other, a small and grasping clique of parvenu millionaires. The moderate incomes, which might have bridged the gulf between the two, were gradually disappearing. It was a narrow and exclusive ring of capitalists, composed of a few surviving nobles, of some of the ancient Italian aristocracy and of knights,* plebeians,† and freedmen, which was thus accumulating land in Italy, wringing fortunes out of the unhappy natives of Asia, and paying for them with the universal detestation of their countrymen. 100 B.C.

Meanwhile the Treasury was empty, the army disorganised, and the fleet which had conquered Carthage was left rotting in the harbours of Italy; Rome had hardly strength enough to quell the slave revolts which were continually breaking out in Sicily and Campania. Yet she would soon need all the forces at her command. Mithridates, always on the alert, had profited by the Cimbric war to break his alliance with the King of Bithynia and to seize Cappadocia, while in Italy the rivalry between the financiers and the old aristocracy was gathering slowly to a climax. **Social anarchy and national defence.**

The knights had much to encourage them in the struggle. Their wealth, their exercise of patronage, their newly acquired rights in the law-courts all justified self-assertion. Although they generally left politics to the aristocrats, and stuck to business and money-making, they felt themselves the equals or even the superiors of the old bankrupt nobility.‡ It is probable that they had contributed largely to the recent successes of the popular party, and to the triumphant re-elections of Marius to the Consulship. All this was not unnaturally resented by the aristocrats. Disgusted with the universal disorder, for which the intrusion of the plutocracy seemed the most obvious cause, embittered by the sting of unaccustomed poverty and by the insolence of their newly discovered rivals, they looked longingly back upon the days of their undisputed supremacy, and clamoured for rigorous legislation against the abuses of capitalism. They could not **The knights and the Senate.**

* Cic., pro Cluent, lvi., 153. It seems likely that the Mæcenas of whom Cicero speaks in this passage was the ancestor of the famous literary patron, who was a knight by origin.

† Compare the case of Caius Octavius, a financier from Velletri who was grandfather of Augustus. Drümann, G. R., iv. 229 ff.

‡ Cic., Pro Cluent, lvi. 153. Pro Rab. Pos., vii. 16.

100 B.C. forgive a member of their own class like Caius Julius Cæsar, who bound himself by friendship and marriage with an obscure equestrian family,* or defied the ostracism of society by embarking upon a business career.†

The new popular party. This incessant rivalry and unrest in the upper ranks of society was a fresh incitement to the democrats, who had for the last decade been resuming a vigorous agitation both in the Assembly and the Law-courts. But the old popular party too had fallen on evil days. It had declined from the pinnacle to which the Gracchi and their enthusiasts had raised it. Two wild and insolent politicians, Saturninus and Glaucia, were the leading popular agitators of the day. Though its leaders went on repeating the old invectives against the nobles, and bringing forward fresh Corn Laws just to flavour their abuse, no serious attempt at constructive legislation had been made. The task, had they known it, was indeed far beyond their powers; for it was not lands to cultivate that the proletariat desired, but incomes that could be enjoyed without undue exertion.‡

The political adventurers. In spite of the protests of the democrats and a succession of scandalous exposures, the chief posts were still largely monopolised by the lowest type of adventurer. The respectable members of both parties, excluded from a political career, found a cheap consolation in lamenting the evils of their times. Justice had become simply one more instrument of oppression in the hands of the wealthy. Fraud and violence, extortion and bribery, were the familiar incidents of public life. At Rome, as at Carthage in the days of her decline, money was fast becoming the sole goal of ambition, and the supreme measure of worth. Yet there were hundreds foolish enough to give up an assured, if modest, position in the country in order to risk their fortunes in some business venture: and many more who reduced themselves well-nigh to bankruptcy to give a superior education to their children. The younger generation, flushed with the rhetoric of their school training,

* These relations between the family of Cæsar and the *parvenus* of finance and politics, which are important for the history of Cæsar, are demonstrated by the marriage of the sister of the older Cæsar with Marius, by the betrothal of the young Cæsar with Cossutia, a rich heiress and daughter of a financier (Suet., Cæs., 1.), and by the marriage of Atia, Cæsar's niece, with Caius Octavius, son of a rich financier from Velletri (Drümann, G. R., iv. 229 ff.). We shall find that there are other facts to confirm the conjecture.

† For instance, the father of Lucius Calpurnius Piso, Consul in 58. Cic., in Pis., xxxvi., 87.

‡ Lange, R. A., iii., 72 ff.

thought that a year or two's chattering in the Forum would talk them into wealth and power. They produced a not unnatural reaction among the upper classes, where the opinion was commonly held that the spread of education was in itself an evil: that all it achieved was the manufacture of a superfluous intellectual proletariat of upstarts, agitators and criminals.* "To learn Greek is to learn knavery," was a proverb common on men's lips.† 100 B.C.

That there was some truth in the taunt is proved by the corresponding increase of crime, which was connived at and fomented by the authorities. Murder, poisoning, theft, assassination, even family tragedies, became alarmingly frequent. The Roman household no longer fulfilled the disciplinary and judicial functions that had been given it by the old constitution, and the domestic tribunal was regarded as a mere relic of a bygone age. The father of a family, so far from bearing rule over his wife and children, was very often unable even to secure their respect. There was a large category of crimes committed by women and young persons which went entirely unpunished, being still outside the cognisance of the law, and no longer dealt with by the family. Moreover, even recognised offences, when committed by Roman citizens, often evaded a penalty. The rough and primitive provisions of the ancient penal code knew no other punishments to the person beyond flogging or death. Imprisonment was not recognised as a penalty, prisons serving merely for the detention of the accused before being brought up for trial. Flogging and the death penalty having been abolished for Roman citizens, there was no alternative but exile; and exile still meant what it had meant in the old days when Rome was an isolated town among a number of hostile rivals—a convenient retirement to Palestrina or Naples. And even this not very formidable prospect was easily averted by a little skilful expenditure. Roman citizens, in fact, were practically immune from every sort of penal jurisdiction. The increase of crime. [Præneste.]

Hence the increasing desire among the Italians to obtain the privileges of citizenship. For the agitation was now spreading far and wide through the peninsula to the consterna- The franchise agitation.

* See Suet., de cl. rh., i. for the edict published against the schools of Latin rhetoric at Rome by the Censors Cneius Domitius Ahenobarbus and L. Licinius Crassus in 92, which was no doubt the expression of ideas widely held at the time. See also Cic. De Orat., iii. 24 for the explanations given by Crassus with regard to the edict.

† Cic., De Orat., ii. lxvi., 265.

100 B.C. tion of the Conservative party. The intellectual and economic unification of Italy was gradually breaking down all distinctions between Romans, Latins and allies, and the old political organisation of the separate districts had by now lost all reality and meaning. Middle class Italians, often heavily in debt and deprived of the patronage of the old local nobility, were now united in their demand for emancipation, and in their hostility to the clique that held the reins of power at Rome. The franchise seemed the remedy for all their grievances.

Intellectualist criticism.

This wild and disordered conflict of material interests could not fail to find reflection in the world of ideas. But here the confusion was intensified by the innumerable and contradictory doctrines of Greek philosophy. It was the fashion for men to consult the philosophers to find out their political bearings; and every educated man had his own particular standpoint from which he looked down upon the distress of the time. The theories thus evolved marked the final extinction of any ancient and definite doctrines which still survived into the new era. There were interminable discussions on the diseases from which Rome was suffering. No one tried the remedy of action. Men frittered away their energies in a morbid inertia, pouring vain encomiums upon a golden past, and childishly appealing for the intervention of some heaven-sent deliverer. Intellectuals singled out the unfortunate Caius Gracchus (it was characteristic that they should choose just the greatest of their statesmen for their scapegoat) as the originator of all the various mischiefs of the time. It was Gracchus who by his corn laws had emptied the Treasury; it was Gracchus who by his judicial arrangements had made the plutocracy all-powerful; it was Gracchus who had let loose the demagogues, disorganised the army and abandoned the provinces to capitalist rapacity.* All Italy cried aloud for a saviour.

Marius' coalition with the demagogues.

The hour had struck; and Marius had no misgivings about the man. Intoxicated by his successes on the battlefield, he regarded them as preludes to new triumphs in the Forum. At the particular moment which we have reached, his efforts were centred upon the attainment of a sixth spell of consular office. But he would have to step down for once into the party arena. Hitherto the proud and masterful soldier had disdained to take sides with either party; nor had it been necessary for him to do so. During the continuance of the Cimbric war he had accepted the suffrages of the Democrats without even

* Diod. Sic., xxxiv., frag. 25.

having to ask for their support.* But now that the invaders were finally repelled he had to face a very different situation. The spontaneous enthusiasm in his favour, generated by the Cimbri, had evaporated at their disappearance, and he could now only become Consul as the representative of one of the two parties in the State. The choice was not so difficult. The Conservatives could never forgive him for having been for four years the champion of the people. The moderate party, as usual in a crisis, was a wholly negligible factor. There remained the Democrats. Marius entered into a compact with Saturninus and Glaucia, securing the Consulship for himself, the Tribuneship for Saturninus, and the Prætorship for Glaucia. Together they formed the Popular government of the year 100, a government in which the conqueror of the Cimbri practically became the instrument of the two demagogues.† His colleagues soon set to work. Saturninus produced a Land Bill, which appears to have assigned the land devastated by the Cimbri in Transpadane Gaul to the Romans and the poor Italians, a Corn Bill reducing the price of the State-sold corn, and a Colonial Bill in which, reviving the idea of Caius Gracchus, he created settlements in Greece, Macedonia, Sicily and Africa for the veterans of Marius.‡ 100 B.C.

Revolution of Saturninus.

These schemes were all of them well enough in the abstract, but in the disturbed state of public opinion no serious discussion of them was possible. In the excitement of controversy the two parties soon came to blows. The turbulent demagogues made the most of their chance; they summoned bands of armed peasants to Rome, and by this means secured the passing of their proposals in the Comitia. Worse was to follow. At the Consular elections for 99, Saturninus gave the signal for open insurrection by putting to death Caius Memmius, one of the most capable and respected members of the opposite party. This was the turning point in the struggle. The rich capitalists, who had so far lent powerful support to the popular party, were frightened into the camp of law and order. The Senate decreed a state of siege, and all respectable citizens armed themselves in self-defence. It was

* Niccolini, S. I. F. C., v. 461, has proved that Plutarch (Mar., 14), is mistaken in his statement about the enemies of Marius.

† App., B. C., i. 28–33 and Plut., Mar., 28–30, give very divergent accounts of the events of this year. See the acute analysis of Niccolini (S. I. F. C., v. 458) for the reasons for preferring the version of Appian.

‡ Lange, R. A., iii. 77–79; Niccolini, S. I. F. C., v. 477 ff.; Neumann, G. R. V., 420.

100 B.C. a difficult situation for Marius; an old man's ambition and a soldier's instinct fought hard in him for supremacy. Discipline won in an end; but it was a doubtful victory. He put himself at the head of the Senators and Knights to suppress the rising of his colleagues; but his action displayed so much weakness and vacillation that the Conservatives believed him to be an accomplice of the rebels, while the advanced democrats of course regarded him as a traitor. Finally, however, he succeeded in quelling the revolt, and Saturninus and Glaucia were put to death by a band of incensed nobles and capitalists under his command.*

Julius Cæsar. It was in this troubled year of Marius's Consulship that his sister Aurelia bore her husband C. Julius Cæsar a son, who was given his father's name.†

The Aristocrats in power; spirited foreign policy. The cry of revolution or spoliation never fails to bring Conservatives to heel. The rich financiers had been scared out of their democratic allegiance, and the general public, disgusted at the turn matters had taken, veered round with equal rapidity. Marius soon felt his position undermined.‡ Suspected by all parties within a year of his triumph over the Cimbri, he discreetly set out on a long journey to the East. The Conservatives thus returned both to office and to power. The more enlightened members of the party timidly urged the claims of social reform. But their feeble protests passed unheeded, and the government preferred to stake its credit upon a spirited foreign policy. It succeeded indeed in inducing

Tripoli.] the Senate to refuse the legacy of the Cyrenaica, which had been left to the Roman people by Ptolemy Apion on his death in 96, being reluctant at a time of military and financial embarrassment to assume fresh responsibilities in a disturbed and semi-barbarous country. But it was all the more anxious definitely to re-establish Rome's waning prestige in the East. There was no lack of opportunity for interference. In 95 Nicomedes of Bithynia was commanded to restore the territory he had taken, and given to understand that disobedience would be disastrous. Galatia was then given back to the Tetrarchs, Paphlagonia declared a free country, and Cappadocia put under the charge of a Parthian noble called Ariobarzanes, who was

* Niccolini, S. I. F. C., v. 485.

† I adopt the traditional date, 100 B.C., for Cæsar's birth. There are good reasons for placing it in 102, but a slight change of date is not important for the history either of the man or of his age.

‡ Plut., Mar., 30, Cic., Pro Rab. perd., ix., 27.

given the title of King.* When two years later Mithridates concluded an alliance with Tigranes, King of Armenia, invaded Cappadocia and drove out Ariobarzanes, the aristocratic party proved equal to the emergency, and the pro-Prætor Lucius Cornelius Sulla was at once despatched with a small army to re-establish Ariobarzanes on his throne.† 93 B.C.

Return of Marius.

But these foreign successes were wholly insufficient to ensure peace in Italy. Distress was growing on every side. The Italians were haunted by their ambition for the franchise and a jealous hostility to the small oligarchy at Rome; and the democrats were moving heaven and earth to recover their predominance. Marius had now returned from the East and could not resign himself in his own lifetime to the rôle of a mere historical personage. The financiers, driven temporarily by Saturninus into an unnatural allegiance, were re-kindling their old fires against their senatorial rivals. In 93 a comparatively unimportant incident, the trial of Publius Rutilius Rufus, provoked the long expected crisis.

The condemnation of Rutilius Rufus.

Rufus was a Conservative and an aristocrat, a man of unblemished record and unquestioned courage, hostile both to the demagogues and the capitalists, and an outspoken admirer of the old *régime*. During his government of Asia as *Legatus Pro prætore*, he had had the misfortune to offend the capitalist interest by vigorous action against the rapacity of the Italian financiers. His enemies vowed vengeance. On his return to Rome they concocted against him a charge of extortion, and secured his condemnation by a tribunal of their friends. Rufus went off quietly into exile; but his martyrdom was not suffered in vain. It awakened all that was best in the old aristocracy to what was going on all round them, to the decay and disappearance of the old order and the ugly and unscrupulous injustice of the new. They saw that it would soon be too late to resist, that they must fight, and fight at once; and fortune provided them with a leader.

Tribunate and assassination of Livius Drusus.

Livius Drusus, an ambitious and passionate young aristocrat, was the man of their choice. Elected Tribune of the people in 91, Drusus endeavoured to adopt against the financiers the policy which Caius Gracchus had found so useful against the big landlords. His idea was to isolate the moneyed interest by means of an alliance between the aristocracy and the popular party. He brought forward a number of laws designed to secure him the favour of the democracy; amongst them a

* Reinach, M. E., 100, 101. † Reinach, l. c.

91 B.C. bill depriving the knights of their powers in the law-courts, and a measure making the tardy concession of citizen rights to the Italians. The idea of Italian emancipation had been slowly making way among the Roman electorate; but it had still to encounter very obstinate resistance. Not a few of the aristocrats had been converted to its support, though they could not help being conscious of the danger it involved to their class and party.* But a great number were blinded by a prejudice so traditional as to be almost a second nature, and they confirmed it by the argument that any increase in the number of poor and ignorant electors would aggravate rather than allay the disorders in the capital.† The financiers and the rich Italians were bitterly and outspokenly hostile. They were convinced that political reform would only be the prelude to a huge social upheaval, and that the Italians, most of whom were poor and indebted, would promptly make use of the franchise to introduce those bogies so familiar to students of ancient history, a revolutionary Land Law and the wholesale abolition of debt.‡ A terrible agitation now broke out, dividing the aristocracy into two angry camps, and stirring all the old embers of controversy into flame. One morning Livius was found assassinated in his house. Profiting by the disturbances which followed his disappearance, the knights hastily passed through a bill creating an extraordinary tribunal to try all who were suspected of sympathy with the Italians, thus ridding themselves by prosecution and exile of all the chief of their opponents among the aristocracy and the democrats.§

The Social War.

But this paltry retaliation was soon rudely interrupted. The death of Livius had sent an earthquake shock through the Peninsula, and Rome soon felt the ground trembling beneath her feet. The whole country south of the Liris, which had been the first to be civilised and the earliest to suffer from the disappearance of the smaller estates and the passing of the old economic order, had grown tired of waiting, and raised the standard of revolt. Men rushed to arms in the cause of a united Italy, against Rome, the allied cities, and the Latin colonies of the centre and north of the Peninsula, most of which

* For instance, Sextus Pompeius, uncle of Cneius. Drümann, G. R., iv. 317.

† Lange, R. A., iii. 88.

‡ This is clear from App., B. C., i. 37.

§ Neumann, G. R. V., 450 ff. Historians differ in their verdict on Livius Drusus. Some consider him a man of merit, others a frivolous agitator.

remained faithful to their allegiance.* Rome was taken utterly by surprise. For once all party quarrels were hushed. The legions scattered broadcast throughout the Empire were hastily recalled to Italy; naval contingents were brought up from Heraclea, Clazomenæ and Miletus,† and arms distributed among all classes both free and slave. Even Marius, mindful of his reputation, begged for a command. Then ensued a war whose horrors can be but dimly descried behind the scanty records that have come down to us. Roman generals, trained in the traditions of colonial warfare, marched ruthlessly up and down Italy, burning farms, sacking towns, and carrying off men, women and children, to sell them in the open market, or work them in gangs on their own estates.‡ 91 B.C.

It was in these campaigns that a studious young man named Marcus Tullius Cicero, born in the year 106, and belonging to a well-to-do family at Arpinum, first saw active service.§ Cicero.

Both sides were fighting not for victory but for extermination, and perhaps it was the very barbarism of such a warfare in the very heart of their own country which brought about its cessation. Romans were forced to realise that magnanimity was a safer policy than conquest, and the party among the nobles which was opposed to the financiers and sympathetic to the Italians came once more into power. In the year 90 the Consul Lucius Julius Cæsar was able to pass a law providing that citizen rights should be extended to the States which had remained faithful to Rome. Not long afterwards, at the end of the same year or at the beginning of the next, two Tribunes proposed the *lex Plautia Papiria*, according to which any citizen of an allied town domiciled in Italy could acquire the rights of Roman citizenship on making a declaration within sixty days to the praetor at Rome. Other measures soon followed. In 89 a *lex Plautia* took away the law-courts from the knights, and enacted that judges should be chosen by the tribes from among every class in the State.‖ It was perhaps in the same year that the Consul Cneius Pompeius Strabo proposed to extend the rights of the Latin colonies to the towns of Cisalpine Gaul, in order to relieve them from the obligation of military service and as a First concession to the Italians.

* App., B. C., i. 39; Cantainpi, M. S., 4 ff.

† Memnon, 29; C. I. L., i. 203.

‡ See Cic., Pro Cluent., vii. 21, and the case of Ventidius Bassus, Aul., Gell., xv. 4.

§ Cic., Phil., xii., 11, 27.

‖ Lange, R. A., iii. 113.

89 B.C. compensation for the losses they had suffered by serving in the Allies' Revolt.* These concessions were far more effective than military operations in bringing the war to a close, and it was not long before only the Samnites and Lucanians remained in the field.

Reaction of the new foreign policy upon the Greeks.

Italy had hardly begun to recover from the horrors of civil war when she was darkened by the shadow of a far worse calamity in the East. Mithridates had been surprised by the Social War just at the moment when he was preparing to embark on a great campaign to drive Rome out of Asia. It was a large and daring policy; but the moment seemed auspicious. The reputation which Rome had enjoyed in the Greek world, during the fifty years which followed the Battle of Zama, as the champion of Freedom, had been gradually waning since the destruction of Carthage and Corinth.† Greek observers watched her as she cynically abandoned her old policy of liberation for an ambitious and detestable system of aggrandisement. They saw Asia exhausted by the exploitation of Roman capitalists, and by the raids of the corsairs to supply Italy with slaves. Rome herself presented every symptom of decadence. Very different seemed the prospects and the power of Mithridates. He could raise enormous armies in his own country and from the Barbarians: he was building a large fleet in the Black Sea harbours; and he possessed in the Crimea a granary sufficient to keep huge forces in the field without any drain on the supplies of his own country.

Mithridates and Bithynia.

At the moment of the outbreak of the Allies' Revolt his preparations were not yet concluded. In the meanwhile he had assisted a younger brother of Nicomedes of Bithynia to seize that kingdom, and had joined hands with Tigranes, regardless of possible Roman intervention, in re-conquering Cappadocia and putting his son on the throne. This was a direct challenge to the Romans, and it had been unexpectedly taken up. The aristocratic party, eager to win its spurs in foreign policy, sent out Manius Aquilius in the year 90 with a special mission to re-establish the two kings in their States, with the help of the small force of the pro-Consul Lucius Cassius. Aquilius and Cassius had no difficulty in accomplishing their mission.‡ But Aquilius, whose stupidity matched

* Asconius, in Pis., p. 3 (Or.). Cantalupi, M. S., 40, assigns this law to 87, but I think it belongs more properly to the year of Strabo's Consulship.

† Polyb., xxxvii. i.

‡ App., Mithr. 11, Liv., p. 74.

his courage, had not come to the East to be bought off by the promises of Nicomedes. Thirsting for operations on a large scale against Mithridates, he tried to induce Nicomedes and Ariobarzanes to make filibustering expeditions over the frontier of Pontus. The unfortunate King showed a very reasonable hesitation. But Nicomedes was in the debt of the Roman bankers at Ephesus for large sums of money borrowed at Rome and in Asia during his exile to facilitate his restoration. Aquilius demanded payment. Nicomedes had no alternative but to raise the money out of the spoils of a raid into Pontus.* Mithridates was not yet to be drawn. Anxious to gain time and anxious also to put his adversary in the wrong, he sent in to Aquilius a modest and reasonable claim for damages, which was of course refused. At the end of the year 89 his preparations were complete. Sending his son to invade Cappadocia, he continued to bombard Aquilius with vigorous requests for reparation. Aquilius replied by a demand for unconditional submission. The result was a declaration of war.† 89 B.C.

First campaign against Mithridates.

When operations commenced in the spring of 88, Mithridates had at his command a fleet of four hundred ships, and one of those enormous armies, comparable to the conscript levies of modern Europe, which Oriental strategy, reckoning solely by quantity, has always insisted on regarding as formidable. It is said that he had a horde of 300,000 men, composed of Greek mercenaries, Armenian cavalry, and an infantry force of Cappadocians, Paphlagonians, Galatians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Thracians, Bastarni and Celts.‡ Aquilius on the other hand had only been able during the winter to collect a small fleet from Bithynia and Asia, and an army of scarcely 200,000 men, including the raw Asiatic recruits of the King of Bithynia, which had been incorporated among the scanty Roman contingents. The result was as might have been foreseen. The four corps into which the Roman army was divided were defeated or dispersed within a few weeks; the Roman fleet surrendered to the superior force of the enemy; the King of Bithynia fled into Italy; the Roman generals were taken prisoners, and Mithridates proceeded at leisure to the invasion of Asia.§

Great was the consternation when this news reached Italy. The Allies' Revolt had already been sufficiently disastrous.

* Appian, Mithr., 11. † Reinach, M. E., 119.

‡ *Id.* 122, n.i. The numbers given by the ancient authorities are certainly exaggerated. § *Id.*, 123–128.

88 B.C. It had ruined many of the small and moderate proprietors by the destruction of their farms and cattle, and had interfered with the rents drawn by many of the rich aristocrats from their South Italian estates. The invasion of Asia now snatched away at one blow all profits on the vast capital expended by Roman financiers throughout the province. A serious financial crisis ensued. The tax-farmers refused payment, while owing to the prevailing conditions of trade the other imposts brought in but little. The Treasury was empty. Capitalists were too frightened to invest, and made strenuous efforts to recover all outstanding liabilities. There was a general scarcity of money, and much of what was in circulation was counterfeit. A Prætor who set his face against the brutality of creditors was assassinated one morning at sacrifice by a band of financiers. Rome was filled with riot, assassination and robbery. The old and the new citizens seized the occasion to vent their grievances in street-fighting. The Italians complained that the Senate had refused to inscribe them within the thirty-five tribes, and was trying to gain time by proposing all manner of schemes to nullify their new rights; one proposal, for instance, was to inscribe them in ten new tribes; another to include them in only eight of the old thirty-five.* But worse news from the seat of war in the East broke into these petty bickerings.

Financial crisis in Italy.

The great pogrom in Asia Minor.

What faced Rome in Asia was not, as she had first thought, a mere struggle between an Eastern and a Western Power, but an organised and widespread revolution against capitalist domination. Mithridates was posing, not simply as the hero of Hellenism, but as the scourge of the cosmopolitan plutocracy under the patronage of Rome, the avenger of the artisans and the peasants, the middle-class traders and landlords of Asia, who were suffering under the extortions of Roman bankers and of Levantine, Jewish and Egyptian usurers. He had sent orders to the governors of all the conquered provinces warning them to prepare for a general massacre of the Italians on the 30th day after the date of his letter, and had skilfully inflamed the passions of the common people, already hotly excited by the condemnation of their protector, Rutilius Rufus. He promised liberty to all slaves, and a 50 per cent. remission to all debtors who killed their creditors. On the day fixed,

* This is the ingenious conjecture of Cantalupi, M. S., 5, to explain the inconsistency between App,, B. C., i. 49, and Velleius, ii. 20. See for this economic and political crisis, Neumann, G. R. V., 504 ff.

100,000 Italians, men, women and children, were attacked and cut down in the streets, or drowned, or burnt alive, by the furious populace in all the greater and smaller towns of Asia. Their slaves were set free, and their goods divided between the towns and the Royal Treasury. The same treatment was accorded to the possessions of non-Italian capitalists such as the Jewish bankers of the Island of Cos.* The spirit of rebellion soon spread to Greece. At Athens the people rose in insurrection, philosophers and University professors helping to fan the flame. Mithridates, having laid the train, was well prepared for the explosion. His general, Archelaus, was immediately despatched with a fleet and an army to reduce the towns which had not yet revolted against the Romans and to conquer and devastate the rich trading centre of Delos.† It was a great and far-reaching struggle for mastery in the Greek world. On the one side was an Asiatic monarchy reinforced by a revolutionary proletariat, on the other the Italian plutocracy reinforced by a decadent aristocracy and a democracy still unconscious of its strength. The intellectual classes, the men of letters and philosophers so numerous in the East, were ranged, as in all great social conflicts, some on one side and some on the other, according to individual sympathies, interests and attachments. 88 B.C.

Sulla put in command: revolution of Sulpicius.

The Senate rose at once to the emergency. It entrusted Sulla, who was Consul in 88, with the direction of the war, and, finding the Treasury empty, it took the decisive step of selling all the goods which were under mortmain, including the whole of the treasures in the temples at Rome.‡ Yet there was treachery almost in their own camp. Nothing is more significant of the bitterness which possessed all parties in Italy at this time than that they should have seized this moment of national danger to pursue their internecine conflicts. The Samnites and Lucanians, who were still under arms, sent ambassadors to Mithridates with proposals for an alliance. A large number of ruined Italians incited by hatred of the Conservatives, who were trying to evade their concession of citizen rights, and by the necessity of somehow making a livelihood, fled to Asia and joined the army of Mithridates.§ At Rome a party among the knights, who resented the loss of their judicial power, were preparing to recover it

* App., Mithr. 22, 23; Plut., Sulla, 24; Memnon, 31; Josephus, A. J., xiv., 7, 2; Val., Max., ix., 2, 3.
† Reinach, M. E., 133–4.
‡ App., Mithr. 22; Oros., v. 18, 27.
§ Front., Strat., i. 3, 17.

88 B.C. by revolutionary means, with the sinister assistance of Marius. The old veteran, who had long been fuming at the loss of his old popularity, and had addled his brains by taking to drink, was now indulging in wild and fantastic dreams of glory; to deprive Sulla of his command against Mithridates, win the fabled treasures of Pontus, and live over again before his death the great days of his Cimbric triumphs.* The coalition found a ready instrument in Publius Sulpicius Rufus, an aristocrat who had been driven by his debts and also, it appears, by personal animosities to become an ardent member of the democratic party. Rufus was at this time tribune of the people. On the pretext of giving a tardy satisfaction to the new citizens, he proposed a law according to which the Italians should be partitioned out among the thirty-five tribes, and had it passed by hiring bands of cut-throats to terrify the electors and do violence to the Consuls. Both Consuls were forced to leave Rome. Sulla went off to join the army which was being assembled at Nola. Thereupon Marius, who was now in company with Rufus supreme master of Rome, had a law passed conferring the Eastern command upon himself, and sent orders to Sulla to give up his troops.

* Plut., Sulla, 8.

CHAPTER V

SULLA AND THE CONSERVATIVE REACTION

Sulla and his character—He marches with his army on Rome—Flight of Marius and restoration of the aristocratic government—Sulla's departure for Greece—Siege of Athens—His energy and resolution—Violence of the new democratic government and death of Marius—Fall of Athens and battle of Chæronea—The Consul Valerius—Flaccus proposes the reduction of debts, and sets out for Greece against Sulla—Battle of Orchomenos—Sulla makes his peace with Mithridates to combat the revolution in Italy—Valerius Flaccus killed by Fimbria—War between Sulla and Fimbria—Sulla master of Asia—Taxes, contributions, penalties—Negotiations between Sulla and the democratic chiefs—Sulla's return to Italy and the civil war—Victory of Sulla; his military dictatorship; Conservative reaction; confiscations, persecutions, proscriptions—Sulla's reforms—The Conservative clique established by him in power—The work of Marius and Sulla.

Character and early career of Sulla.

If the wealthy classes so often come off second best in a struggle with the democracy, the cause is generally to be found in their disinclination to submit to leadership. It has always been a failing of rich and educated men to have too high an opinion of their own abilities. The prospect which faced the Roman Conservatives at this moment, when the Revolution, in the person of Marius, had made itself complete master of the State, was indeed dark enough to close up the party ranks. Yet it was only by accident that they discovered in Sulla a fit champion for their cause. Sulla had up to this time been one of those superior but solitary figures who are sometimes to be found in an aristocracy when its old governing *régime* is on the eve of dissolution. Too intelligent and cultured to cherish the old prejudices of his class or to ignore the symptoms of its inevitable decadence; too conscious and contemptuous of the true value of success to court power by the meannesses on which fame in a democracy nearly always depends; energetic, fond of money, and impatient of inaction, yet with a marked inclination to scepticism and self-indulgence, he seemed to most of his contemporaries so indifferent to all distinctions

88 B.C. between right and wrong, and so desirous for mere sensual and intellectual enjoyment, as never to be willing to sacrifice his own interest or pleasure to any ideal cause of principle. Hitherto his career had been rather military than political. He had preferred campaigning against Cimbri and revolted Italians to joining hands with one or other of the two parties at Rome. Although his origin and connections attached him rather to the Conservative than to the popular party, he had taken as small a share in party struggles as was compatible with the attainment of political and military promotion. His advance had thus been very slow, and he was over fifty when, in this year, he finally reached the Consulship. It is likely enough that, in his impartial contempt for both parties, he would have allowed Conservatives and Democrats to go on massacring one another indefinitely, if the revolutionaries had not suddenly marked him out for attack by attempting to deprive him of his Eastern command. He was not particularly concerned for the interests of the Conservative party, but he had no intention of surrendering the conduct of a war which he hoped would bring him both money and renown.

Sulla seizes Rome.

His reply to the summons of Marius was the first revelation of his characteristic daring and rapidity of decision. Having first made sure of the fidelity of his troops, he marched straight up from Nola upon Rome and occupied the city. Marius, utterly dumbfounded by the suddenness of the attack, had no alternative but flight;* and Sulla thus became at one blow sole master of the situation. But since his object had merely been to preserve his command and not to make a counter revolution in the Conservative interest, he used his victory with moderation. He prosecuted only twelve of the insurrectionary leaders, annulled the unconstitutional laws of Sulpicius, and allowed the elections for the following year to take place undisturbed. A Conservative, Cneius Octavius, was elected to the Consulship, with Lucius Cornelius Cinna, a man who passed for a Democrat, as his colleague. Sulla did no more than make them take an oath to respect the laws.†

Strategy of Mithridates.

At the end of the year he left for Brindisi, where he embarked for Greece. He had with him five legions, a few incomplete cohorts, and a small force of cavalry, in all about 30,000 men.‡ Never perhaps did so small an army set forth

* App., B. C., i. 57–58; Plut., Sulla, 9; Liv., p. 77; Oros, v. 9, 4. † Cantalupi, M. S., 26 ff.

‡ App., Mithr., 30; B. C. i., 79; Reinach; M. E., 152, n. 4, as against Cantalupi, M. S., 72 ff.

to accomplish so huge a task. Mithridates was preparing to defend his conquests with his wonted vigour, and to make full use of his great numerical superiority. Archelaus and Aristion, who were already in Greece at the head of considerable armies, were to withdraw their troops to Athens and the Piraeus, and allow themselves to be besieged, while a new army was to be assembled in Asia, and to be sent to Greece in due course when the Romans had become exhausted by the siege of Athens. As a plan of campaign, this left nothing to be desired. It compelled Sulla, as soon as he had disembarked in Epirus, to march South with his 30,000 men on the heels of the retreating enemy, and eventually to tire out his totally inadequate forces in a long and difficult siege. Meanwhile the Pontic fleet endeavoured to intercept communications with Italy, and to hamper the provision of Sulla's supplies. 87 B.C.

Sulla's situation was thus already sufficiently precarious. But it became ten times more so when the Democrats recaptured the reins of government in Italy. No sooner had Sulla departed than the Consul Cinna again raised the question of the new citizens and their enrolment in the thirty-five tribes. His colleagues of course opposed the project. Both sides proceeded to arm their respective partisans and a pitched battle was fought in the streets of Rome. Ultimately Cinna was deposed and proscribed. He immediately retired to raise the standard of revolt in the country, collecting troops and money through the whole of Italy, and encouraging the Samnites, who were still under arms, to prolong their resistance. In the midst of this confusion Marius reappeared upon the scene from Africa, where he had been in hiding, accompanied by a small troop of Numidians, and began to enlist an army of freedmen and slaves in Etruria. The Senate attempted to prevent the outbreak of a second Social War by granting citizen rights to all the Italians who had not benefited by the *lex Julia* and the *lex Plautia Papiria*; only the Samnites and the Lucanians, as being still in revolt, were to be excepted.* Unfortunately there was no second Sulla in their hour of need,† and Marius had no difficulty in seizing Rome. The embittered old soldier wreaked a cruel vengeance on the proud nobles who had always refused him their admiration. A large number of aristocrats were executed, and their heads carried to the house of Marius, or fixed as an adornment to the Rostra. New revolution at Rome.

* Liv., p. 80, Cantalupi, M. S., 40.
† Cantalupi, M. S., 30 ff.

87 B.C. Sulla was declared the enemy of his country and deposed from his command; his house at Rome was razed to the ground, his villas pillaged, and his goods confiscated.

Sulla before Athens.

Meanwhile the little army before Athens which was to reconquer the East was being abandoned by the home government just at the moment when the hardships of a long siege were beginning to tell upon its strength. Disease and skirmishing were daily thinning its ranks, and the stock of supplies was running dangerously low. If the relieving army from Asia arrived in time to avert capitulation, the besiegers would be cut off without hope of retreat.* In this supreme crisis of his career, Sulla showed the stuff of which he was made. The contemptuous sceptic, the degenerate Sybarite, who had made his *début* in life by repairing his fortunes with the heritage of a Greek courtesan, the man who seemed to have taken part in all the fighting of his age simply to secure for himself the riches indispensable for self-indulgence, stands forth at last in his true character, strong-willed, merciless, and absolutely self-centred. Sulla is one of those supreme egoists who are fortunately rare in the pages of history, one of those characters who appear in times of social dissolution and decay, when every moral tie between man and man is relaxed, and all who do not wish to go under must make their own personal safety the supreme law of their life. Entrenched before Athens, he was like a Titan at bay. To save himself and his army he swept off every obstacle from his path. He cut down the thickets of the Lyceum and the plane trees of Plato's Academy to accommodate his siege works; he established a mint in the Peloponnese, to provide sufficient pay for his troops; he made ruthless requisitions throughout Greece, pillaging temples, regardless of the sacrilege, converting tripods, and vases, and jewels, all the artistic treasures dedicated by countless generations of worshippers, into silver and gold to meet his needs. He sent one of his younger officers, Lucius Lucullus, with six ships to break through the cordon of the Pontic fleet and bring up vessels from all parts of the Mediterranean, and to restore the Roman sea-power in the Ægean. He did all that was possible, and far more than was conventional, to encourage his men; he shared every hardship and joined in every skirmish, appearing in person to lead them to the attack, and distributing prize-money among all ranks. Marius had been the first to see that under the changed conditions of the age

* See, on the siege, Reinach, M. E., 154 ff.

Rome must be content to recruit her legions from amongst the lowest stratum of the Italian populace; that the conquests on which she had entered with a national militia of yeomen could only be continued by a standing army of paid soldiers. But it was Sulla who first realised that this new breed of soldiers could be treated in all ways like regular mercenary levies and submitted to every severity of discipline, hardship, and danger, provided only that they were skilfully commanded and generously paid. 87 B.C.

During the whole of 87 Athens continued to offer a desperate resistance against all assaults. Archelaus was an excellent general, and if the fortunes of the war had depended entirely upon him, Sulla would perhaps have succumbed. But the reinforcing army, which was due to arrive from Asia in the autumn of 87, did not make its appearance. Hampered by its own unwieldy size, and delayed by a disorganised commissariat and indifferent leadership, its advance was slow and fitful. The governor of Macedonia, Caius Sentius Saturninus, set himself across its path with the few troops at his disposal, and succeeded in intercepting it in Macedonia at a difficult season of the year.* It was obliged to go into winter quarters in that not very hospitable country, and Sulla was thus set free to make the most of his time till the spring. **Delay of the Pontic reinforcements.**

But hardly was this danger removed when another storm-cloud beat up from the west. At the beginning of 86 death put an end to the troubled career of Marius. But his disappearance did nothing to settle the dangerous dispute over the Eastern command, a dispute which had already lasted two years, and had almost added the horrors of a second Civil War to the vexations of a party conflict at Rome. There were many reasons why the Democrats could not leave the command in the hands of a man like Sulla, who, though by no means a whole hearted Conservative, was yet thoroughly out of sympathy with the popular party. The most pressing were no doubt provided by the numerous aspirants in its own ranks, who were ambitious of high military command. But private interest could be speciously reinforced by the fancied necessities of policy. The party which inherited the traditions of the Gracchi and Marius needed to restore its prestige by some striking military success. By the repulse of the Cimbri and Teutones it had saved Italy; by the discomfiture of Mithridates it would re-conquer Asia. Nor did it shrink from **The Democratic foreign policy.**

* Reinach, M. E., 160.

86 B.C. accepting the legacy of personal bitterness bequeathed by its dead leader, and from treating Sulla frankly as an implacable enemy. Lucius Valerius Flaccus, the Consul who was elected in the place of Marius, was ordered to go to Greece with an army of 12,000 men to relieve Sulla of his command.* The new Consul was an ardent democrat who had just passed a law releasing all debtors from 75 per cent. of their debts; if he arrived before Athens capitulated, Sulla would be caught in a vice between the legions from Rome and the armies of Mithridates.

Capture of Athens and battle of Chæronea.

But Flaccus' preparations took time. He was still in Italy when on March 1, 86, Sulla succeeded, after a desperate assault, in capturing both Athens and the Piraeus. These successes infused new life into his soldiers; but they were not decisive for the issue of the campaign. Without the command of the sea Sulla was not yet in a position to inflict a crushing blow upon the enemy. Archelaus retired into the peninsula of Munychia, where he embarked his whole force in good order, and sailed to Thermopylæ to join the invading army. Thus after the capture of Athens, Sulla had still, as before, three armies to face, the united forces of Archelaus and his Asiatic reinforcements, and the legions of Flaccus, who had by now disembarked in Epirus. Sulla realised that he must rout the Pontic armies before the arrival of the new Consul. Although the enemy were in considerable numerical superiority, he marched with all his forces to meet Archelaus, and defeated him in the great battle of Chæronea, in Bœotia.†

Mithridates heads the social revolution.

This victory, the first won by Roman troops over Mithridates, produced an immense sensation all through the Empire. Its consequences were far more momentous than those of the capture of Athens, and it led to a situation which was favourable both to Sulla and to Roman interests in general. For some months past the respectable classes in Asia, aghast at the massacres of 88 and at the revolutionary methods of Mithridates, had begun to intrigue with Rome against the Pontic domination. They found it easy to make use of the discontent of the common people at the continual levies of the new government.‡ Already by the end of 87 Ephesus had revolted in favour of Rome.§ The battle of Chæronea, following close upon this revolt,

* Reinach, M. E., 186 n. 3.

† *Id.*, 162–176.

‡ *Id.*, 179.

§ Waddington-le-Bas, R. I. A. M. n. 136 a.; App. Mithr., 48; Oros, vi. 2, 8. For the date see Reinach, M. E., 183 n. 1.

encouraged the Roman party throughout Asia, broke down the wavering fidelity of the towns, and forced Mithridates to new shifts to recover his prestige. He now adopted the most interesting, and the most ominous, of the Protean diguises of his career, proclaiming himself throughout Asia as the champion of the Social Revolution, abolishing all debts and promising liberty to all States which remained faithful to his cause.* He then prepared to send a new army, under the orders of Dorilas, for the invasion of Boeotia and the re-conquest of Greece. 86 B.C.

Co-operation of Sulla and Flaccus.

But the most important consequence of the victory of Chæronea was to facilitate what had hitherto seemed as unlikely as it was indispensable—peace between Sulla and the Democratic party. Flaccus, who seems to have been less unreasonable than his kind, had no sooner landed in Epirus than he realised the full nature of his mission: that he was expected to re-open the Civil War at the very moment when the common enemy was about to throw new forces into the province he had conquered. He saw that to dispute the honour of holding the chief command against Mithridates, when the united forces of the two rival generals were hardly in a position to defeat him, would be criminal folly. Sulla, for his part, was not the man to be blinded either by success in battle or by the bitterness of party; he was fully alive to the dangers of a simultaneous campaign against the King of Pontus and the forces of the Democrats. Unfortunately, Flaccus was prevented by Sulla's proscription from throwing the two armies into one, and Sulla had to be content with a secret arrangement, according to which the two forces were to act in agreement without their co-operation being generally known. Flaccus was to use his authority as Consul to induce the people of Byzantium to fit out a fleet, thus carrying the war into Asia. Sulla was to remain in Greece to await Dorilas, who was now advancing, after taking on board off Eubœa Archelaus and 10,000 survivors of the battle of Chaeronea. This sensible arrangement produced excellent effects. By the close of 86 both armies had won considerable successes. Sulla attacked and annihilated the army of Dorilas at Orchomenos, sent him flying into Eubœa, where he was unable to follow him, and then retired into Thessaly for winter quarters.† Flaccus invaded Macedonia, drove the last remnants of the Pontic army before him into Asia, and crossed the Bosphorus with the help of the

* Reinach, M. E., 184. † *Id.*, 187–9.

86–85 B.C. Byzantine fleet. Thus all Mithridates' schemes had been checkmated. When the year ended, so far from having recovered the ground lost at Chæronea, he had definitively lost all his European conquests.

The party struggle in Italy.

The armies of the proscribed Pro-Consul and the legitimate Consul had co-operated in this happy result, though Sulla's achievements outweighed those of Flaccus. If the Italian Democrats had been inclined to follow the wise example of Flaccus, if they had revoked Sulla's proscription, and accepted his services on reasonable conditions, the crisis which had almost entailed the loss of the Empire would have been over within a few more months. But the course of politics in Italy rendered this easy solution impossible. The Conservative party had been almost entirely exterminated by the revolution. A large number of the aristocracy and the wealthier citizens had been killed, others had escaped to Sulla or into distant provinces, those who remained in Rome were paralysed with fear. The equestrian order had fared little better. The financiers and merchants who composed it felt themselves threatened on both sides. They hardly knew which to shun as the greater evil: a Conservative reaction that would take away all their privileges, or a social revolution that would follow the precedent of the reduction of debts which had

86 B.C. just been decreed. The democratic party, strong in the support of the middle class, felt too sure of its own power to make any agreement with Sulla. They distrusted his origin, his connections, his past, and most of all perhaps the friendly reception he had given to so many of the more eminent of the proscribed Conservatives.

Fimbria supersedes Flaccus.

Flaccus' conduct found so little favour with the Democrats that during the winter of 86–85 Fimbria, one of his lieutenants and a member of the popular party, suspecting the secret agreement between Flaccus and Sulla, succeeded in rousing the soldiers to mutiny; Flaccus was put to death by his troops, and Fimbria proclaimed Commander-in-Chief. This petty military revolution made all hopes of conciliation futile. Sulla now found himself once more in a very critical situation. He could not afford to let Fimbria conclude the conquest of Asia; for the Democrats, already sufficiently his enemy, would only use their success to turn their arms against himself and his army. On the other hand, it was very dangerous for him to attack Fimbria, for Mithridates, in spite of his loss of prestige since the defeats at Chæronea and Orchomenos, would be

certain, on the outbreak of Civil War, to recover everything that he had lost. 85 B.C.

Such was the situation which forced Sulla, acting purely in self-defence, to take a step which was destined to be decisive for his whole future career, and to exercise a baneful influence upon Rome for the next twenty years of her history. Unable to fight a double war against Fimbria and Mithridates, and equally unable to come to terms with Fimbria, he decided to negotiate with Mithridates for the conclusion of peace upon reasonable terms. The moment seemed auspicious. The length of the operations and the defeats of the last year had exhausted the military and financial resources of the King of Pontus. Greece was entirely lost, and almost the whole of Asia in revolt. By the offer of land and money and other tempting promises, Sulla gained the ear of Archelaus, persuaded him to surrender his fleet, and to approach his master with definite proposals.* The *status quo* of 88 was to be restored; Mithridates was to keep the whole of his old kingdom of Pontus, to receive the title of friend and ally of the Roman people, and to pay over to Sulla 2000 talents and a fixed number of warships. Sulla even promised to facilitate his retreat and to draw a veil over his failure by granting an amnesty to the rebel States of Asia. **Sulla makes advances to Mithridates.**

Regarded from the standpoint of the military and political traditions of Rome such a treaty was almost an act of high treason. The King who had massacred 100,000 Italians and devastated the fairest provinces of the Empire was to keep his kingdom, to receive the title of friend and ally, and to pay a comparatively trifling indemnity. But the condition of Italy after half a century of political and social conflict was so disastrous, that Sulla was practically forced into buying safety for himself and his soldiers by a formal alliance with the butcher of the Italians. Yielding to the solicitations of Sulla, Archelaus visited Mithridates, and used all his influence to persuade him. The wily Oriental, who well understood why Sulla's terms were so favourable, at first attempted to improve them by the threat of an alliance with Fimbria. But Fimbria did not give him the chance. Burning to achieve something that would justify his anomalous position, he took the field in the spring of 85, marched into Asia and won several signal successes over the armies of Mithridates, culminating in the **Fimbria captures Pergamus.**

* For all this see Plut. Sulla, 22; Memnon, 35; App., Mithr., 54–55, with the remarks of Reinach, M. E., 194.

85–84 B.C. capture of Pergamus.* Meanwhile Lucullus, who had at length succeeded in collecting a fleet, appeared on the Asiatic coast to incite the cities to revolt. Mithridates, seeing his army disorganised and his power in Asia slipping from his grasp, was finally persuaded that it would be simpler to make an agreement with Sulla than with Fimbria. He sought an interview with the pro-Consul at Dardanus, accepted his terms, and embarked the survivors of his army for Pontus.†

Death of Fimbria.

Thus rid of Mithridates, Sulla advanced to meet Fimbria in Lydia. The murderer of Flaccus had proved himself a violent and exacting commander, and had quickly forfeited the sympathies of his army. At Sulla's approach his men broke up to join forces with the victor of Chæronea and Orchomenos, and Fimbria himself found refuge in suicide.‡ Sulla thus remained sole master of Asia at the head of a large fleet and a considerable army, together with the resources secured by the indemnity from Mithridates.

Sulla and the Democratic government.

This success was indeed no more than his due. It was Sulla who had really destroyed the power of Mithridates, and restored to the Empire the provinces he had over-run. Had it not been for Chæronea and Orchomenos, Fimbria could never have entered Asia, still less have captured Pergamus. Yet there was one grave blot on his record. The Treaty of Dardanus had granted what was virtually a free pardon to the man who had aspired to be the Hannibal of the East. This was a concession in which neither party, however greatly it desired peace, would have dared to acquiesce, unless Sulla had been absolute master of the situation. Sulla, of course, was very well aware of this, and did his best to meet the difficulty. During the years 85 and 84 he worked hard, not only to strengthen his personal position with the legions, but to make his peace with the Democrats at home. He was anxious to conclude some satisfactory arrangement which would allow him to return quietly to Italy for the enjoyment of the immense wealth which he had amassed during the war. If his opponents had only guaranteed to maintain his Eastern settlement, and engaged not to go back upon the Treaty of Dardanus, he would have been quite ready to abandon the Roman Conservatives, who had not raised a finger to help him in his moment of danger. But the spirit of universal distrust which is so deep-rooted at all times of revolution, and so complicates the conflicts of

* Reinach, M. E., 199 ff. † *Id.*, 202 ff.
‡ *Id.*, 207 ff.

political parties, made any such agreement impossible. A good many nobles had taken refuge in the camp of Sulla, and were continually urging him to overthrow the Democratic government. All over the Empire the survivors of the Conservative party had been persuaded by the news of Sulla's victories into the belief that they had at last lighted upon a true champion who would be prepared to repeat against the existing *régime* his bold stroke against the revolution of Sulpicius in 88. Intrigues and conspiracies were already in the air, and an active agitation now broke out amongst the youth of the wealthier classes. Sulla was far too clever a man to become the blind instrument of a party which was itself to blame for its disasters; yet the turn which events were taking could not help proving injurious to his attempts at conciliation. The Democratic government, always suspicious of his past, scented treason at once. The middle class were afraid that he would attempt to deprive the Italians of their citizen rights. The popular party was of course, burning to have its revenge on the Conservatives. The disavowal of the Treaty of Dardanus, which would deprive their opponents of all credit for the conquest of Asia, was a tempting battle-cry for party warfare. They would refuse to recognise a treaty containing provisions so humiliating to the Republic: the so-called victory of a Conservative general over Mithridates were better named a national humiliation. 84 B.C.

Sulla and the financiers.

If the moral and political situation of Italy made an agreement unlikely between Sulla and the democrats, the conflict of economic interests soon rendered it impossible. The knights, many of whom had invested money in the province of Asia, had now become as powerful with the Democratic government as they had been under every preceding *régime*; for the wave of feeling which had stirred the whole State and thrown together men of all parties against the exactions of the financiers had passed away as suddenly as it had come. It was inevitable that the plutocrats in the equestrian order should take sides against Sulla. It was true that he had reconquered Asia; but events had forced him to injure many of their interests in the process. The invasion of Mithridates had brought about a social revolution and the abolition of debt, and the re-establishment of Roman authority was followed no doubt, in the normal course, by a tendency in favour of the wealthier classes. Sulla, however, had done his best to stem the current of this reaction. He had restored their value

84 B.C. in law to contracts concluded between individuals, and had re-established the old local obligations between debtor and creditor; but he had also abolished the farming of the land-tithe upon land decreed by Caius Gracchus, and decided that all taxes should be levied by the province itself. War, revolution, and capitalists had played havoc between them with the resources of Asia. Sulla who, like the penurious members of his class, had a detestation of financiers, was desirous so far as possible to save the province from their exactions. Moreover, he was concerned for the payment of his own war indemnity—an extraordinary contribution of 20,000 talents and all the arrears of tribute for the last five years, with which he hoped to purchase the fidelity of his legions.* He must have known that these arrangements would embroil him with the financiers, many of whom had previously been farmers of the provincial land-tax, while others were hoping to become so on the repression of the revolution. It is not surprising, therefore, that the long negotiations between Sulla and the Democrats led to no result. Sulla had done his best. He held his hand during the whole of the year 84. At last at the beginning of 83, when the ports of Italy were being closed against him, he left the two legions of Fimbria behind him in Asia, and set out on his homeward journey, to declare war on the Democratic government. He brought with him to the West not only the gold of Mithridates and the spoils of the temples of Greece, but a more precious possession in the books of Aristotle, which he had seized in the library of Apellicon at Athens.

The Civil War.

It is unnecessary to deal in detail with the history of the Civil War that followed; it must suffice merely to emphasise its one most important result. Sulla, hitherto the representative of neither party in the State, ended by becoming, against his own wish, the leader of the extreme reactionaries. On his arrival in Italy, the survivors of the Conservative party flocked from all sides to his standard, and hailed him as the deliverer they had so long expected. Attempts were at once made to use him as the instrument of their partisan interest, and before long some of the younger men of the party found courage to take action. One of their number, Cneius Pompeius, son of the Consul of the year 89, and a member of a noble but wealthy family, recruited a small force in Picenum. Another young noble, Marcus Licinius Crassus, who had lost a brother in the revolution, followed his example; so did

* App. Mithr., 62; Plut. Sulla, 25. *Cf.* Reinach, M. E., 209 n. 4.

Metellus Pius, son of the general who had fought against Jugurtha. Sulla, however, was not yet willing to become the tool of a party clique. He reassured the Italians by declaring that he would not go back upon the great measure of Italian emancipation, and consented further to treat with the popular party through the mediation of the Senate. But it was all in vain. The chiefs of the popular party, who do not seem, with the exception of Sertorius, to have been men of any mark, were too distrustful of his intentions. With the whole of Italy at their back, they were not disposed to be frightened by the few legions of Sulla, and met all his advances with polite but determined evasion. Thus Sulla was at last driven to accept the offers of the Conservatives. He entrusted important commands to Pompey, Crassus and Metellus, and took up arms as the champion of the counter-revolution. His operations were marked by his customary rapidity and decision. Before long, by a skilful admixture of force and conciliation, he had restored some semblance of order to a society in which a long period of unrest and revolution had broken down all the ordinary restraints of morality. By the adroit use of his money he detached from the democratic party a large number of its civil and military supporters, and those who resisted his temptations were discouraged by his decisive victories over all the leaders of the democratic forces. One after the other they fell before his sword; Sertorius alone succeeded in escaping to Spain. Within a few months Sulla had overturned the revolutionary government and become supreme master of Italy, with an armed force at his back, while the popular party lay crushed beneath his heel, and the Senate sat by, an interested but impotent spectator. 83–82 B.C.

From this time forward Sulla seems a changed man. The proud, lofty and cynical aristocrat had always kept concealed in his nature a strain of sensual brutality, which at last burst out in full force. His imperious disdain for his fellow-men and the resentment inspired by his perils in the Civil War now turned him, whether by instinct or calculation, into a butcher. He was not to be deceived by the flattery men paid him after his victory. He realised that those very Conservatives to whom his victories had been so useful, and for whom he entertained as sincere a contempt as for their opponents, would be the first to bring against him all the old party reproaches, the Treaty of Dardanus, the death of Fimbria, the Civil War, and the first to abandon him to the tender mercies of the democrats

Need for the restoration of order.

82 B.C. unless order were re-established upon so secure a basis that his arrangements remained unassailable either in Italy or in the East. For the restoration of order he needed no party allegiance. He resolved to do his work thoroughly, and to do it alone.

Sulla's Dictatorship.

His first step was to claim from the Senate the office of Dictator, which brought with it the right of life and death over every citizen for an indefinite period, and plenary powers for the reform of the Constitution. The Senate was not in a position to resist, and the *Lex Valeria* granting him the office was passed without opposition. Armed with these powers, he put to death an enormous number—according to one account 5000—of those who had in the present or previous generation, supported the democratic movement; he persecuted their families, reduced them to poverty by confiscations, annulled all their marriages with aristocratic houses, and decreed that the sons of the proscribed should be excluded for ever from every office in the State. Whole cities were punished by the infliction of fines, the demolition of fortifications, and the confiscation of public and private lands. He distributed these wholesale amongst his veterans, whom he settled upon the country, like colonists in a conquered province. Two thousand seven hundred knights and about 100 senators were put to death, and any one who had sinned in the least against the interests or the prejudices of the Conservative party went in danger of his life.

Sulla and his parasites.

Unfortunately in a country already suffering from the effects of a whole generation of social disorder, a political re-action soon degenerated into an organised pillage. Sulla could hardly avoid collecting round him a heterogeneous crowd of adventurers as shameless and unscrupulous as himself—slaves and freedmen, plebeians and patricians, bankrupt nobles like Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus and aristocratic financiers like Marcus Crassus. These men succeeded in piling up enormous riches by the simple process of buying up cheap the goods of the proscribed. Sulla could do nothing to interfere: perhaps he would not have wished to had he been able. Cold and merciless in the hour of victory as in the hour of danger, he was untouched by that desire for adulation so characteristic of usurping greatness; he seems to have felt an exquisite satisfaction in showing his comprehensive contempt at once for Conservatives and Democrats, rich and poor, Romans and Italians, nobles, financiers and plebeians. All equally trembled in his presence, as he sat enthroned and indifferent, in his

palatial home, to receive the homage of all the greatest personages in Rome, when with hatred in their hearts they came to pay their humble respects to the supreme arbiter of life and death. He derived a cynical enjoyment from the spectacle of all that was noble or illustrious or aristocratic in Roman society, the young and old representatives of historic families and the fashionable ladies of the nobility, squabbling and elbowing for admission to the sumptuous dinners at which he sat, surrounded by his favourite singers, thinking only of his meat and drink, and not taking even the trouble to ask the names of his innumerable and illustrious guests.* With the same sublime indifference he allowed his relatives and the friends of his youth to wrangle with the crowd of ambitious and greedy parasites in his vestibule and to trifle with his complaisance to secure the lands, the houses or the slaves of the proscribed; to extract a pardon for some less conspicuous victim or the condemnation of some innocent citizen whose wealth or character had exposed him to the hatred of his accusers. Nothing was too insignificant to escape the cupidity of these detestable informers; a chance friendship or relationship, or an inference drawn from some utterly innocent action were sufficient to provide material for a capital charge. The number of persons ruined in this way was very considerable. A great many took refuge with the barbarians in Spain and Mauretania, or at the Court of Mithridates. All who failed to secure the protection of some friend at Court spent their days in continual apprehension of arrest. The young son of that Caius Julius Cæsar, whose sister Marius had married, and who had died at Pisa of apoplexy a few years before, was one of those whose life was in especial danger; for he was not only the nephew of Marius, but had committed the additional offence of marrying Cornelia, the daughter of Cinna. The Dictator commanded him to divorce her; but Cæsar who was of passionate temper, and was moreover very fond of his young wife, in whose favour he had refused a rich heiress, Cossutia, refused to obey. He preferred to see the confiscation of his own patrimony and of the dowry of his wife, and to leave the city at the imminent risk of proscription. Soon afterwards, however, Sulla was induced by the intervention of some of his relatives to extend him a free pardon.† 82–79 B.C

* Plut., Cat. U. 3; Sulla, 34–36.

† Suet., Cæs., i., Plut., Cæs., i. I do not think any political motive need be assigned to this act of Cæsar's. He was still very young,

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82–79 B.C. The popular party was crushed for the moment; but it was necessary to provide against its possible revival. It was with this object that Sulla, who had now developed into a true representative of the Conservative cause, attempted to effect a great reform of the constitution on the lines foreshadowed by Rutilius Rufus and his small group of aristocratic followers, who now suddenly saw almost the whole of their programme put into execution. Sulla abolished the Censorship and the public distributions of corn; he increased the number of the Prætors to eight, and of the Quæstors to twenty; he took away from the Assembly the power of discussing laws without authorisation from the Senate; he transferred to the Assembly of the Centuries the powers which had belonged to the Assembly of the tribes; he deprived the Tribunes of the people of the right of proposing laws, and of standing for the higher magistracies, leaving them only the right of hearing appeals. He decreed that no one should be elected to an office except in the normal order of promotion, and that re-election should only be possible after the lapse of ten years; he attempted to check the increase of crime by sharpening the penalties for offences of violence and fraud. He freed no less than 10,000 slaves and gave them full citizen rights, selecting the youngest and bravest of those who had belonged to the proscribed, added 300 equestrian members to the Senate, and restored to that body its old judicial prerogatives.*

Sulla's reforms.

Real nature of his settlement. His main object, in short, was to break down the influence of the two new powers in the State, the middle class and the equestrian order, by a re-establishment, with slight modifications, of the old aristocratic constitution which had existed at the time of the first Punic War, when Italian society, then predominantly agricultural, aristocratic and military, had been composed of a perfectly rigid stratification of classes. At the top had been an aristocracy which, if not particularly enlightened, was at any rate, both disciplined and powerful; next came the middle classes of the country districts, who

and quite unknown. It was a youthful indiscretion, due to passion or pride, and nothing more. There are divergences between Suetonius and Plutarch. Suetonius seems, on the whole, the more trustworthy, except as regards the dignity of the Flamen Dialis. Here both are wrong, and the true explanation is given by Velleius, ii. 43. The dictum attributed by Plutarch and Suetonius to Sulla that "in Cæsar there was many a Marius" is certainly apocryphal.

* Lange, R. A., 3, 144 ff.; Cantalupi, M. S., 110 ff. On the controversy as to Sulla's treatment of the tribunes see Sunden, *De tribunicia potestate a L. Sulla imminuta quæstiones*, Upsala, 1897.

were respectful, contented, and prosperous enough for their needs; beneath them again were the slaves, docile and as yet not very numerous, who were treated with strictness, but not with brutality. By the time when Sulla attempted to restore this old order, all these separate layers had become folded and broken and inextricably confused, at first by the gradual weakening of the aristocracy, then by the steady pressure of the middle class from below, and finally by the violent earthquake of the Revolution. He selected for the change the very moment when slaves had been incited to betray their proscribed masters, and when his own parasites were banding together in associations in which slave and freedman, aristocrat and bourgeois joined hands to do violence to law and custom, and to involve the whole of Italy in bloodshed and devastation. His settlement can hardly be classed as an aristocratic restoration, for the Roman aristocracy had already ceased to exist. Rather it was a wild and sanguinary carnival, in Italy and Asia and throughout the Roman dominions, of a small oligarchy of slaves and assassins, of needy aristocrats and unscrupulous adventurers, remorseless usurers and professional *condottieri*, triumphing over a vast Empire of oppressed millions who in one passionate and impotent access of fury had risen against their oppressors. Impassive amidst the carousals of the actors, singers, and dancers who nightly flocked to his halls, Sulla looked complacently on at a victory which he had not sought, but for which nevertheless, he was alone responsible. The moment he felt secure of his life as a private individual in the Empire which he governed as Dictator, he abdicated his office to devote himself more completely to a life of pleasure. It did not spare him long. At the beginning of 78 he died. 82–79 B.C.

It would be unjust to credit Sulla with the worst sort of ambition; he was a sincere Republican who hastened to give up his power the moment it was possible for him to do so without danger to his own life and that of his friends. But the force of circumstances and the peculiar limitations of his own nature caused him to play a less conspicuous part in history than might have been expected from a man of his activity and intelligence. He was far from being a model of the true Republican; to compare him with a man like Washington, for instance, would be ludicrous. Remarkable as he was for the clearness with which he conceived his ideas, and the infinite energy and resource which he displayed in their Order against justice.

78 B.C. execution, he was incapable of any great depth of passion or of any really creative intellectual conception; he lacked just that spark of divine madness, that almost mystical power of inspiration which is reserved for the greatest spirits and seems somehow to embody, in confused and unconscious form, the vital instinct of our race as it presses onwards towards the future. Thinking only of self-indulgence, and indifferent to all that was outside this narrow range, nothing seized his attention in the life of his time but the confusion introduced into the structure of its society—a confusion due apparently to the perverseness and folly of mankind, and needing only, he thought, to be set right with the sword. Thus he succeeded in creating, not a Constitution or an Empire, but simply a gigantic system of police—conceived with unerring clearness, and executed with superhuman energy. These police measures were perhaps necessary at that moment to save the Empire and the whole of ancient civilisation from the destruction with which they were threatened by the desperate revolt of the oppressed thousands in Italy and Asia. But its value in history does not exceed that of all similar systems. Order, even in the best organised State, is only a smooth and specious fiction in the place of justice and wisdom. An ordered society is like a field which has periodically to be touched and torn by the plough before the soil receives the virtue to renew its creative power. The terrible upheaval in Italian society may perhaps be compared to a ploughshare penetrating into the very depths of the old order, turning and returning the soil of which it was composed, bringing to light much that had been hidden, breaking up into powder much that for many months had been hardened in the sun, opening new pores for the showers of heaven, waking into activity all the living seeds within as a preparation for a new and abundant harvest. Marius had contributed his part to this great revival, in spite of the criminal ambitions of his later years, by tracing the large outlines of the new military organisation of Rome, and by helping to solve the question of Italian emancipation. Sulla contributed nothing at all. His work was even more self-contradictory than that of the Gracchi. He climbed into power by wielding the chief weapon of the new plutocracy, by the lavish use of money among friends and opponents. He used it to restore the political institutions of the age of agriculture. No wonder that his work and his influence were short-lived. The imposing edifice of his constitution was like a cabin of

reeds put together on the sea-shore, that is carried away with one burst of rough sea wind. Nothing survived of his work but the fear inspired by a type of statesman new to the history of Rome, a type which contemporaries regarded as the personal creation of Sulla, but which was in reality simply the inevitable offspring of the commercial era and of democracy as it was understood in the ancient world—the type of the military chief at the head of a devoted army which he controls by his money and by the sword. 78 B.C.

Thus ended the stormy generation which had opened with the assassination of the Gracchi. In the midst of all this confusion, one great historic process had been quietly completed. The old Italy, the Italy of Oscans, Sabellians, Umbrians, Latins, Etruscans, Greeks and Gauls had disappeared into the past. In place of a number of small federal republics, there was now a single Italian nation, with an agriculture, a commerce, an army, a civilisation and a culture of its own, welded together into a solid and compact middle class out of a medley of human units from all parts of the peninsula who had been thrown together, in close and intimate relations, by the tie of a common ambition, by fellowship in study, in commerce, or in arms. **The new Italy**

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CHAPTER VI

CÆSAR'S DÉBUT IN POLITICS

Cæsar's first Eastern journey—Cæsar at the siege of Mitylene and the Court of Nicomedes—Scandals about his stay in Bithynia—His return to Rome—The revolution of Brutus and Lepidus—Pompey—Patrimony and vicissitudes of Cæsar's family—He accuses Dolabella and Antonius—Corruption of the Conservative party—Failure of Cæsar—He returns to the East—His capture by pirates—The war against Sertorius—Revival of prosperity in Italy after the revolution—Revival of conquests—Financial expansion of Italy—Italian usurers and capitalists in Gaul, Spain, Greece, and Asia—The slave-trade—The civilising influence of the Asiatic slaves in Italy—High life at Rome—Luxury and refinements—Dress—Cato and the new fashions—Spread of education; desire for encyclopædic information; the philosophy of Aristotle—More slaves employed in field work; progress of agriculture—Vine and olive cultivation—Stock breeding—Increase of share-holding companies—General rise of the standard of comfort—Spread of the trading spirit to the middle class—General enthusiasm for education—The Italian *bourgeoisie*.

Cæsar in Bithynia.

AFTER his narrow escape from Sulla, Caius Julius Cæsar, like many another young aristocrat who has committed an imprudence, decided to go away from Rome on an extensive journey. He left Italy in the suite of the pro-Prætor Marcus Minutius Thermus for the siege of Mitylene, the last of the rebel cities in Asia to hold out against the Romans. From Mitylene he went on to Bithynia, sent by Thermus on a mission to the old king to demand ships to assist in the siege. His stay in the palace of Nicomedes, far from Rome and his family, afterwards became a by-word with his enemies, who were fond of relating how the young Cæsar plunged deep in all the vices of an Oriental Court.* The legend is not impossible in itself, but the allegations of political opponents, particularly upon matters of this nature, have never been regarded as serious evidence. What

* Suet., Cæsar, 2 and 49; Dion, xliii. 20. The account of this first phase of Cæsar's life, so clearly given in Suetonius, is obscure and confused in Plut. Cæs., 1–4. See also Dio. Cass., xliii. 20.

is certain is that he made repeated visits to the Court of Nicomedes* between this time and 78, when Publius Servilius, Pro-Consul of Cilicia undertook a campaign against the pirates of Lycia and Pamphylia. Cæsar then joined Servilius, and held a subordinate command in the operations; but shortly afterwards, on the news of Sulla's death, he returned to the capital. 78 B.C.

The oligarchical cabal.

He found Rome, with the great Dictator removed, far from happy under the rule of the oligarchs. The morrow of an abortive revolution has an atmosphere all its own; distrust and dissension, hatred and anxiety, seem to poison the very air men breathe. And it is the victors, the triumphant representatives of police, order and security who suffer most from its contagion. Sulla's successors were neither united amongst themselves nor confident in their powers. In spite of the gigantic effort made by Sulla, the aristocratic constitution he had established was by no means well founded; it offended a great number of individual interests without responding in any way to the needs of the age. Nor could it be expected to work smoothly and successfully in the absence of the old Roman nobility, for whose use or in whose memory it had been devised. It is true that the survivors of the hereditary aristocracy, in particular the representatives of its most respected houses, such as Quintus Lutatius Catulus, rallied vigorously to the support of a constitution which had realised all the reactionary ideas of their class. They imagined that the tide of democratic advance, which had been encroaching so perilously during the last two generations, had been swept back for ever; that the old aristocratic constitution, the sole foundation of Roman greatness, had been firmly and finally secured against attack. But a small group of noble families does not make up a nobility, and these respectable aristocrats formed in reality but an insignificant minority of the ruling caste. Side by side with them, and bound by the same party allegiance, there were the associates and the hangmen of Sulla, enriched by the confiscation of the goods of the proscribed; there were stragglers and deserters from the party of Marius; there were the old moderate Conservatives, now transformed by the revolution into reactionaries of the deepest dye; there was the whole familiar class of trimmers and turncoats whose gaze is always turned towards the rising sun. So far from being representative of one section or order in the State, the

* Suet., Cæs., 2.

78 B.C. Conservative party was little better than a band of political adventurers, of a predominantly low-class character, manifestly unworthy of that respectful obedience which is the very essence of aristocratic government.

The Cabal and Italian national sentiment.

The ruling faction may have been fully conscious of their lack of moral authority: but they might still hope to hold Italy together in a common detestation for the party of their opponents. It was a congenial policy, and they adopted it with alacrity. They set consistently to work to brand the revolutionaries as pariahs. They excluded from the Senate, the magistracies and the provincial governorships all who would not bow the knee to Sulla and the Conservative chiefs as the sole great men of the preceding generation, or refused to heap contumely upon the democratic party and its representatives, and upon the ideas and causes for which Marius in particular had fought. Yet the pretence was too unreal to impose on men for long. Despite all its failings, there was no denying that the democrats had done good service to Italy. If the men now in power affected to class Marius with the corsairs and criminals, and took an unworthy delight in overturning his trophies, it remained none the less true that it was Marius who had repulsed the Cimbri and Teutones, and Sulla who had signed the Treaty of Dardanus. It was impossible therefore for the Conservative clique to parade their hatred of the democrats and their chiefs without wounding the national susceptibilities of Italy. And indeed the Italians regarded them with anything but favour. With no moral or sentimental prestige to protect them, Sulla's successors were encamped in the centre of the country like a small army of occupation in a conquered land, surrounded and harassed on all sides by bands of watchful and implacable enemies. The reaction had meant insult, humiliation, and ruin to a large circle of individuals: Sulla had sown a crop of bitter and painful memories in every corner of Italy. The sons of the proscribed who had lost parents, possessions and political rights, the cities which had been robbed of territory and Roman citizenship, the knights who had forfeited their power in the law-courts and almost all their old political influence, the great Italian middle class which was afraid of losing the privileges it had so painfully won, all these formed an angry and restless multitude of opponents in face of which the strongest government might well have felt dismay. Several of these factions were indeed temporarily disorganised and dispersed by the

terror of persecution. But what would happen on the day that they were re-united under a single leader? 78 B.C.

The foreign policy of the Cabal.

There was one way indeed, in which the oligarchs might hope to gain strength and prestige—the adoption of a bold foreign policy, and the achievement of some striking military and diplomatic success. The Government, might, for instance, have won pardon for many of its failings by wiping out the stain of the Treaty of Dardanus. But a small political cabal hastily made up, in the midst of a great political upheaval, out of a number of discordant and vacillating elements, and paralysed by the very horror of the experiences through which it had passed, had no energy left for a vigorous initiative. Its most powerful instrument, the Senate, remained entirely inactive, attempting to avoid every occasion of war in the fear of the possible consequences of defeat, and refusing to risk on distant expeditions any considerable part of the forces whose presence seemed indispensable to maintain order at home. This was curiously exemplified in the year 81, when Alexander II., King of Egypt, followed the example of the King of Pergamus and bequeathed his country to the Senate. Egypt was the richest kingdom of the ancient world: yet the Senate rejected it outright, merely taking over the money treasure of the deceased king which had been deposited at Tyre. It is true that when Mithridates demanded the recognition of the Treaty of Dardanus the Senate refused to comply. But, however unwilling it might still show itself to share Sulla's responsibilities, it did not seem to be aware that its refusal made a second war inevitable, and made no preparations whatever for meeting it.

Lepidus' consulship.

It is not surprising therefore that on the death of Sulla the surviving members of the democratic party began to show signs of activity. A serious incident, which happened while Cæsar was in the East, soon demonstrated to all the world the inherent weakness of Sulla's government without a Sulla to direct it. On the first outbreak of the new popular agitation the democrats actually secured for their chief a certain Marcus Æmilius Lepidus, one of the Consuls for the year 78. Lepidus was rich and of noble family, and the owner of the grandest palace in Rome.* He had hitherto been a Conservative, and in Sulla's circle, and had even enriched himself by buying up the goods of the proscribed.† But he was ambitious, volatile

* Pliny, N. H., xxxvi. xv., 109. † Mommsen, R. G., iii. 18.

78 B.C. and head-strong, and had taken offence because Sulla had tried to prevent his election in the Consulship. After Sulla's death,* he secured the leadership of the popular party by proposing to re-establish the distributions of corn,† to recall the exiles,‡ and to restore their electoral rights,§ and their lands to the towns which had been robbed of them.‖ His agitation proved unexpectedly successful.

Rising in Etruria.

The weakness of the government was manifest from the very first. Although Lepidus stood almost alone in his propaganda, the Senate, many of whose members had committed murder and extortion during the reaction, and which had no trustworthy troops at its disposal in the capital, was intimidated into partial submission. It yielded on the question of the distributions of corn and the return of the exiles, but offered vigorous opposition to the other proposals, particularly that of the restitution of lands.¶ But the agitation of Lepidus had roused a spirit of revolt all over Italy. In the neighbourhood of Fiesole, in Etruria, many of the landlords who had been despoiled by Sulla, took up arms to drive out the occupants of their old domains.** At Rome the extreme Conservatives, headed by the other Consul, Quintus Lutatius Catulus,†† accused Lepidus of fomenting rebellion, and proposed energetic measures of suppression, which the Senate had not the courage to adopt.‡‡ It was thought simpler to remove Lepidus from Rome by finding various pretexts for hastening the departure of the two Consuls for their provinces before the election of their successors had taken place. It appears that their provinces had already been assigned to them, Narbonese Gaul to Lepidus, Italy to Catulus; §§ they were now

[Fæsulæ.]

* Peter, G. R., ii. 138; Ihne, R. G., vi. 8; Mommsen, R. G., iii. 18; and Drümann, R. G., iv. 339, relying on the speech of Lepidus in Sallust, Hist., i. fr. 55 (Maurenbrecher), believe that his opposition began while Sulla was still alive. I agree with Nitzsch, G. V., ii. 176, and Franke, J. P. P., 1893, i. 49, in placing the outbreak of the movement after Sulla's death.

† Gran., Licinius 43, ed. Bonn.

‡ Gran., Licinius 43.; Florus, ii. 11; Sall., Hist. fr. 77, 6, ed. Maurenbrecher, Leipzig, 1893.

§ A probable conjecture of Drümann's (G. R., iv. 342.)

‖ Gran., Lic., 43; App., B. C., i. 107.

¶ Franke, J. P. P., 1893, i. 54–55.

** Gran., Lic., 45. †† Plut. Pomp., 16.

‡‡ Plut., Pomp., 16. It is to this incident, I believe, and not to an actual attack on Rome by Lepidus to which Sall., Hist., i. fr. 77 6 ff. refers.

§§ Sall., Hist. Fr. 66, is surely alluding to the departure of the Consuls for their provinces, and not as Mommsen (R. G., iii. 26), thinks

78 B.C. citizen occupying no official position. That such a demand should be presented by a friend and follower of Sulla, who had imposed so strict an observance of the old rules for the succession of offices, was indeed incongruous: it only serves to show once more that even the intimates of the Dictator only took his constitution seriously where it happened to coincide with their own personal interests. The Senate, with its usual timidity, did not venture to rebuff a young man with Pompey's record. Heedless of the stipulations of the constitution it was professing to defend, it entrusted him with an army for the campaign against Brutus.

Defeat and death of Brutus and Lepidus.

Fighting began soon afterwards. Lepidus made a bold attempt to seize Rome, but was successfully held at bay by the Consul Catulus and by Appius Claudius, whom the Senate had been prevailed upon to nominate interrex with plenary powers.* In the North Brutus was defeated by Pompey and shut up in Modena. He eventually surrendered on condition that his life should be spared, but was treacherously put to death by his conqueror,† leaving behind him at Rome a young widow named Servilia, and a son, a little more than a year old,‡ who bore his father's name. Owing to the defeat of Brutus, and possibly also to the losses which he had suffered in his attacks on Rome, Lepidus retired again towards the North. He was, however, defeated once more at Cosa in Etruria, and embarked with the rest of his army for Sardinia, where he fought several unsuccessful actions against the Governor Caius Valerius Triarius; § he died not long afterwards, a victim to the hardships of campaigning, and also, it is said, to chagrin at the infidelity of his wife. The surviving members of his army were taken to Spain by an officer named Perpenna, to join forces with Sertorius.

Cæsar's début.

Cæsar had been both prudent and fortunate in steering clear of these complications: but, ambitious like the rest of his generation, he was now longing to make his mark. He was a member of an ancient family which had for the last six generations obtained no higher office than prætorship and had forfeited its position

* I agree with Franke, J. P. P., 1893, i., p. 63 n. 4, that Florus ii. 23, is wrong in saying that Rome was defended by Pompey and Catulus. Pompey was at that time in the Po valley about to engage Brutus, as is related in Plut., Pomp., 16.

† Plut., Pomp., 16; Oros, v., 22; Livy, P., 90.

‡ Bynum, L. M. J. B., 6 ff., has convinced me that Brutus was born in 79 or 78, and not, as generally supposed, in 85.

§ Asc. in Scaur. p. 19 (Orel.); B. C. H., ii. p. 265 n. 27.

given large sums of money for their administration, and compelled to take an oath not to turn their arms against one another. 78 B.C.

Returning to Rome in the midst of these commotions, Cæsar naturally met with anything but a cordial reception from the ruling clique, who had by no means forgotten his parentage and his past. His sudden arrival, timed apparently just on the eve of a new popular rising, must have seemed to them very suspicious. The Marian party were, in fact, already planning an insurrection. Lepidus had taken the Senate's money and left for his province; but he interrupted his journey in Etruria, and began openly calling the poorer classes in that district and other parts of Italy to his standard. Meanwhile Marcus Junius Brutus, another noble who had been compromised by the revolution, and owed his pardon by Sulla simply to family connections, was recruiting an army amongst the dregs of the population in the Po valley,* almost certainly in connivance with Lepidus. At Rome there were many who were in the secret of the conspiracy and prepared to follow the two Revolutionary chiefs. Cæsar's brother-in-law, Cinna, tried to persuade him to join;† but Cæsar refused. Years and experience had tempered the ardour of the young gallant who had risked his head for his lady, and confirmed him in a native caution which is henceforward one of his most characteristic instincts. Cæsar's return.

On the outbreak of the war the Senate needed two safe generals to take command against Lepidus and Brutus. One was very naturally the Consul Catulus; the other should have been a magistrate in high position. But among the conspicuous members of Sulla's party it was impossible to overlook the young Cneius Pompeius. Pompey was born in 106, of a rich and noble family. We have seen that, while still a youth, he had distinguished himself at the head of an army during the civil wars carried on by Sulla after his return to Italy; since then he had married a niece of the Dictator, and was now the most promising of the younger members of the party. His ambition prompted him at this juncture to ask the Senate for the chief command of the war, in spite of the fact that he was a private Pompey's return.

to a joint expedition into Etruria to repress the disorders, which hardly required two Consuls to attend to them. The corresponding passage in Gran., Lic., 45, is too fragmentary and uncertain to be used as evidence. The whole story is very obscure. See Franke, J. P. P., 1893, i. p. 57.

* Franke, J. P. P., 1893, i., p. 56. † Suet., Cæs., 3.

by forming connections with parvenus like Marius, and with members of the capitalist bourgeoisie, thus escaping financial disaster, but without successfully attaining to wealth.* If Cæsar was able to play a prominent part and to live on a lavish scale, he owed it to the wisdom of his mother, Aurelia, who was an admirable specimen of the old-fashioned Roman matron.† The time had come for him to make his *début*. Feeling better fitted for experiments in the field of eloquence than in that of revolutionary action, he began in 77 by prosecuting two powerful personages in Sulla's clique, Cornelius Dolabella, a friend of the Dictator and ex-Governor of Macedonia, and Caius Antonius Hybrida, another of Sulla's generals. He accused them, of course with a purely political object, of crimes committed in Greece during the late war. 77 B.C.

The administration of the Cabal.

There could be no doubt that the Conservative government had grossly abused its powers. In spite of all Sulla's efforts, his reaction had only tended to increase the corruption and debasement of Roman politics. It had reduced to silence the tribunes of the people, whose unquestioned rights in the Roman democracy were analogous to those enjoyed by the Press in the western world of to-day: it had crushed the Democratic party, and terrorised the middle class, the proletariat and the knights who had been the backbone of its strength. The result was that, in the absence of free speech, the pushing and unscrupulous members of the party had easily driven all their more respectable competitors into the background. The financial administration was in the hands of the quæstors, light-headed young aristocrats with no taste for the complicated mathematics of their department, who allowed the officials of the Treasury to abuse their confidence by drawing up false balance sheets, neglecting to force payment from the State debtors, and playing havoc in a hundred ways with the public revenues.‡ Violent, avaricious and unscrupulous politicians, including many who had won a disagreeable notoriety during Sulla's proscriptions, such as Caius Verres, Cnæus Dolabella and Publius Cethegus, had no difficulty in securing election to high office and exercised a dominant influence amongst the languid and fashionable crowd which filled the Senate house. Their hand was even heavier on the provinces than on Italy. In Narbonese Gaul, for instance, the financiers were continually

* This appears to me a fair conclusion drawn by Drümann, G. R., iii. 733, from the course of Cæsar's early career.

† See Drümann, G. R., iii. 128. ‡ Plut., Cato of Utica, 17-18.

77 B.C. bringing pressure to bear upon dishonest governors to filch the lands of the free tribes on the frontiers, and lease them out at low rates to Roman capitalists.* All through the provinces governors committed acts of cruelty and spoliation which practically always went unpunished. At Rome itself there was no guarantee for justice; the Senatorial tribunals reconstituted by Sulla were even more inefficient than those of the knights; no rich and powerful man had any difficulty in securing an acquittal provided he employed the necessary intrigues and disposed of the necessary wealth.† There was scope enough and to spare, as Cæsar knew, for the prosecution of a provincial governor, and he might reasonably expect to find public opinion on his side.

Sertorius and Mithridates.

Yet for all this Cæsar had selected a most unpropitious moment. No sooner was the scare from Lepidus dispelled than a new danger appeared from two opposite quarters of the horizon. The first sign of trouble came from Spain, where Sertorius, originally a small peasant proprietor from Norcia, who had been sent by his mother to study law, and who had turned instead to soldiering, had unfurled the drooping standard of the revolutionary cause. He had over-run almost the entire peninsula, built himself an arsenal, organised an army, and founded a school to give a Latin education to the sons of the Spanish nobility. He had, moreover, welcomed the fugitives of the party of Marius, chosen a Senate from amongst their number, and inflicted numerous defeats upon the Sullan commander, Metellus Pius. But he was not the champion of a mere local movement. At the other end of the world Mithridates, stung by the refusal of the Senate to put its signature to the Treaty of Dardanus, was exercising all his energy to prepare for a new war, laying up huge supplies of money, stores and arms, and entering into secret agreements with the pirates, who had profited by the anarchy of the revolution to renew their exploits in all parts of the Mediterranean. Persuaded by his previous experience that a small but efficient body of troops was far more serviceable in the field than the huge and cumbrous array of the ordinary Oriental army, he was trying to organise a force on the Roman model with the help of numerous Italians who had entered his service.‡ There was grave anxiety at Rome amongst those who remembered

* See the whole speech of Cicero *Pro Fonteio.*
† Cic., in Verr., A., i. 13, 37–40; 15, 43–5.
‡ Reinach, M. E., 315 ff.

the stormy days of 89. Once again they seemed face to face with the three-fold danger of a Civil War in Italy, Mithridates in the Eastern provinces, and the obstinate and daring resistance of the pirates. Nor did they fail to suspect some mysterious agreement between Mithridates and Sertorius across the length of sea that separated Spain from Pontus.* 77 B.C.

In such a crisis as this, accusations brought, however justly, against persons in high position, were too reminiscent of the futile tribunician scandals of old to disturb the political equilibrium. Unprincipled politicians denounced them as subversive and revolutionary, and the moderates, too nervous, despite the honesty of their intentions, to back up the accusers, disguised any satisfaction they may have felt at this bold attack on the ruling faction. Thus, in spite of the daring eloquence of their assailant, the two accused were safely acquitted, and Cæsar found himself more deeply compromised than ever in the eyes of a Government which already suspected him as the nephew of Marius.† He had blundered once more, and he was not slow to perceive it. And indeed all the luck fell to the young men of the opposite party. Pompey had returned from his war against Rufus more vain and self-confident than ever. Not satisfied with the laurels he had already won, he kept his troops under arms in the neighbourhood of Rome, and began intriguing to be sent to Spain to reinforce Metellus against Sertorius. Although Pompey had not yet been elected to a single magistracy, the Senate was too apprehensive of a second military revolt to refuse its sanction to the arrangement.‡ **Failure of Cæsar's prosecution.**

On Pompey's appointment Cæsar lost heart and decided to renew his Eastern travels. He set out at once for Rhodes, at that time the favourite resort of rich young Romans who wanted to perfect their oratorical style. But an unpleasant adventure befell him on his way out: he was captured by a crew of pirates, who kept him prisoner on board ship for some fifty days, and only released him on the return of the trusty messengers, his slave Epicrates amongst others, whom he had sent on to Asia for a ransom. It was an annoying mishap, which could not fail to cause amusement at his expense in Roman society. But he consoled himself on the recovery of his liberty by sending home a delightful romance about his captivity, telling how he had lived for forty days with the pirates like a prince among his slaves, joining in their **Cæsar and the pirates.**

* Sall., Hist., ii., xlvii. 6 ff. † Suet., Cæs., 4.
‡ Plut., Pomp., 17.

77 B.C. sports, reading them his poems, and threatening to have them all hanged if ever they restored him to liberty. The end of it was, of course, that as soon as he recovered his freedom he had actually manned a vessel, tracked his captors, and had several of them crucified.* Whatever the truth underlying the tale, Cæsar settled down quietly and seriously to study at Rhodes, while round about him, unsuspected by him as by all his contemporaries, a new society was slowly being formed and perfected, as the straggling survivors of the great age of Revolution passed away to make room for a fresh generation, born about the year 100.

Benefits of the Revolution.

For indeed the pessimists had once more been refuted. The ordeals of recent years had not hurt Italy beyond healing. Once the terrors of the Revolution and the Reaction were removed, she began slowly to adapt herself to the changed conditions they had created, and to find in them new instruments for social well-being. That, after all, is a constant law of national life; and there were many influences at work which permitted Italy to obey it. The butchers and plunderers who had run riot through the peninsula had laboured better than they knew: they were the harbingers and pioneers of a coming prosperity; they had re-established the equilibrium between wealth and poverty. Massacres like those which culminated in the Civil War and the Mithridatic campaigns, would no doubt have been sufficient to overwhelm a small subject or tributary nation, poor in capital and slaves and living on the produce of its own labour, which must have failed to repair the loss of so much capacity from its fields, its workshops and its army. But this was far from being the case with Italy. Here, where thousands were struggling to make profit out of Rome's political supremacy over the Mediterranean peoples and to live upon the labour of slaves and subject nations, these wars and massacres entailed advantages of their own: they reduced the competitors and improved the conditions in the race for riches and renown. In not a few families decimated by the Revolution, the surviving members found themselves on the return of peace, notwithstanding all the losses they had sustained, more comfortably off than they had been before. Moreover, the revolutionary Government had in 86 decreed the reduction of all debts by 75 per cent., thus relieving many a patrimony of its heaviest burdens and compensating a large number of individuals, at the

* *Id.* Cæs. 2, Suet., Cæs. 4.

expense of quite a few, for the injuries inflicted by the civil wars. 77 B.C.

Sulla's spoils.

Italy emerged from the crisis, with her finances repaired and her army reorganised. If she had only been able to save her Empire by acquiescence in a humiliating treaty, she was still strong enough after her victory to force Greece and Asia to pay a part of the costs of her revolution. Sulla alone had captured in Asia and sold to Italians vast quantities of slaves; he had confiscated throughout Greece many lands belonging to towns and temples, and leased them to Italian capitalists; and had paid into the Treasury all that remained of his Asiatic spoils, 15,000 pounds of gold and 115,000 pounds of silver, equivalent to-day to about £800,000,* and worth a great deal more than this according to the ancient standard of prices. If we add to this the sums given by him to his troops in Asia and brought by them to Italy, those spent in Italy to win over the men of the democratic army, and those which he kept for himself or gave away to his friends, we shall probably arrive at a total four or five times as great as this.

The Financiers in the Eastern provinces.

Another still more important effect of his victories must not be overlooked. They revived, on something very like its old scale, the old system of exploiting the provinces. This was especially the case in Asia, where Sulla had vainly attempted to introduce better methods by his abolition of tax farming. Though the land taxes were no longer leased out to Italian knights, the cities of Asia had still to pay Sulla a contribution of 20,000 talents and five years' arrears of taxation, a crushing exaction, which, falling upon a country already crippled by revolution and war, drove towns and private individuals to borrow largely from the only great capitalists of the time, the Italian financiers. The condition of Greece, by nature a poorer province, was still more unfortunate. Called back to the country by towns and private individuals in need of funds, the Roman capitalists, who had been hunted down with so much fury but ten years before, made their way back one by one to snatch all that remained over after the great upheaval. We find them at Delos, which had suffered so cruelly from Mithridates, at Patras and Argos, in Elis and Laconia, at Tenos, Mitylene, Assos and Lampsacus, even in the still independent State of Bithynia.† Wherever they

* Pliny, N. H., xxxiii., 1, 16.

† Delos: Strabo, x., 5, 4 (486) is mistaken, as the inscriptions and excavations have shown. *Cf.* Homolle, in B. C. H., viii., 140 ff.

77 B.C. appeared they lent money to towns and private persons, secured part of the local commerce and export trade, and took the place of the native merchants ruined by the war. Amongst their number was a young man named Titus Pomponius Atticus, a knight who had inherited an immense fortune from his uncle, one of the richest tax-farmers in Rome. Atticus had gone to Athens after Sulla's victory, to study at the University and so escape the dangers of the Revolution; but finding in the fallen greatness of Hellas a fruitful field for the investment of his capital, he had been able to combine business with learning and so to increase both in wealth and wisdom.* Greece and Asia were indeed no longer so rich a prey as at the time of their original annexation; too many greedy adventurers had already picked over them, and the larger part of the riches accumulated by the Attalids had long since been carried off by Italian capitalists, Roman officials, or the generals of Mithridates. Yet there was still, especially in Asia, much treasure to be won by western enterprise; there were works of art, precious metals and splendid buildings, artisans skilled in every branch of labour, and peasants who could make wealth out of the inexhaustible resources of the soil. Capitalists were able to secure mortgages on future harvests, to seize statues, pictures and goldsmiths' work, houses, estates, public buildings, and finally the native inhabitants themselves, reducing to slavery all peasants who were unable to pay their debts or accepting in lieu of payment the sons and daughters of their debtors.† Many financiers now also turned their attention to Narbonese Gaul, where the taxes raised for the army which was fighting in Spain against Sertorius drove many private individuals and cities into debt. Finally, in Italy itself, if the revolution had destroyed a large amount of wealth, it had put into circulation a great deal more which had lain idle for centuries, such as the Treasures dedicated in temples and the sacred property sold by the Senate.

Indebtedness and enslavement.

Patras.: Cic. ad Fam., xiii., 17 and 50. Argos: C. I. L., iii., 531; 7265 Elis.: Cic. ad F. xiii., 26. Lacoma: Le Bas Waddington, V. A., 242, a. Tenos: C. I. G., 2335. Mitylene: C. I. L., 3, 7160. Assos.: *Papers of the American School at Athens*, 1, 30–32. Other inscriptions on Italian merchants, probably dating from this time: B. C. H., 1878, 598 ff., 1880, 161, 179, 515. Lampsacus: Cic. in Verr, A. 2, i. xxvii., 69. Bithynia; Suet., Cæs., 49.

* *Cf.* Drümann, G. R., v. 8. That Atticus lent without interest, as stated by Corn. Nep. Att. 2, may possibly be true of Athens, where he lived, but is certainly untrue of the rest of Greece.

† Plut. Luc. 20; App., Mithr., 63.

So Italy had very considerable compensations for her sufferings during the war and the Revolution. The enormous mass of property stolen and confiscated during the democratic revolution and under the reaction, had changed masters, but had as a rule not been destroyed. The despoiled proprietors had no doubt a thousand good reasons for complaining, but the nation as a whole had received no very serious injury. The national wealth was still largely intact, and its new owners were no less desirous than their predecessors to exploit and to enjoy it. 77 B.C.

All this serves to explain how, during the years when Cæsar was studying at Rhodes, almost on the morrow of a sanguinary internecine struggle, there was yet a marked increase in the general luxury and comfort. The East, after all, was the centre of the oldest civilisation, the true seat of the arts and industries and of agriculture, the home of the most accomplished workers, cultivators and artists in the ancient world, who produced for the wealthy classes of all the Mediterranean countries. Amongst the slaves captured in Asia by Sulla during the Mithridatic War and sold to Italian merchants,* and amongst those whom the financiers afterwards bought in Asia or who were kidnapped by pirates, there were skilful field labourers, gardeners, dyers, weavers, perfumers, cooks, sculptors, painters, smiths, metal workers, musicians, engineers, architects, writers, grammarians, all of them men and women of fine and active intelligence quick to pick up any new accomplishment, licit or illicit, at the bidding of their masters. Hundreds of Italian families had been prepared by the slow infiltration of Græco-Oriental influences to welcome the great inrush from the East when it came; they were receptive of new manners and ideas and ready to enjoy what they had saved or gained during the Revolution. These slaves were just the teachers they needed; under their supple tuition the masters of the world no longer dispersed the wealth of their conquests in barbaric profusion to satisfy the grosser appetites; they learnt to improve their agriculture, to refine their manners, to study and enjoy the fine arts, and to make vice itself compatible with elegance and distinction. The new slave immigration.

Thus, while Cæsar was quietly studying at Rhodes, life and fashions at Rome were being completely transformed. The new influences from the East had created a new social atmosphere. Old distinctions were being broken down, old pre- Roman high life.

* App., Mithr., 61.

77 B.C. judices overcome, and the most different tastes and occupations found common interests and enthusiasms in a common world. Among those admitted within the charmed circle of Society were cultivated financiers, like Titus Pomponius Atticus, who took no part in public life, millionaires like Pompey and Crassus, whose ambitions were centred upon politics, scions of old aristocratic houses who had recovered their fortunes during the Revolution, such as Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus,* and young men of rich or well-to-do municipal families, who after having received a careful education at home, had come to Rome to lead a life of fashion or acquire fame in the law-courts or in a political or military career. Amongst these were Cicero, Varro and Caius Octavius, son of a rich money-lender from Velletri: † well-known advocates like Hortensius, who made large fortunes by defending provincial governors against charges of extortion; students like Valerius Cato and Cornelius Nepos; courtezans from the East whose beauty had won them universal notoriety; savants from Greece and Asia who had found a welcome in all the great houses; and Roman ladies of advanced opinions who took a serious interest in politics or dabbled in Greek and philosophy. The different members of this diverse and cosmopolitan society stimulated one another with their particular enthusiasms; the student inspired the financier and the politician with a taste for culture; the *gourmet* infected the writer and the business man with the delights of self-indulgence; the financier interested the dilettante, the soldier and the statesman in the excitements, if not perhaps in all the detailed and doubtful operations, of investment and speculation.

Versatility and expense of fashionable life.

As all these various passions took fire from mutual contact, fashionable life gradually increased in profusion and complexity; every one hastened to fit up a villa in the country and in the watering-places, like Baiæ, which were now coming into favour;‡ to keep up a large staff of slaves, each of whom had his particular duties,§ valets, litter-carriers,¶ and men to look after the lamps during the night,** besides musicians,†† secretaries,‡‡

* Cic., in Verr. A., ii. 53, 139. † Drümann, G. R., iv. 229.

‡ E.g. Corn. Nep. Att., 14, 3, thinks it noteworthy that a man so rich as Atticus possessed "nullam suburbanam aut maritimam sumptuosam villam. See also Varro, R. R., i., 13, 6.

§ Cic. in Pis., xxvii. 67. ¶ Catull., x. 16 ff.

** Val., Max., vi., 8, 1; Suet. Aug., 29.

†† Cic. in Verr. A., ii., 5, 25, 64.

‡‡ Suet., Cæs., 74.

librarians, copyists,* and even doctors;† to have all that he needed in daily life prepared in the house by his slaves,‡ except in the case of rare and costly objects which could only be procured from distant countries; to exhibit a good assortment of Greek works of art, tables from Delphi, vases from Corinth, cups, candelabra, statues, paintings, bronzes, and even a sculptured basin for the pond in his park. Many of the rich financiers and Senators now gave up the primitive and inconvenient houses in which they had grown up, and built themselves palaces rivalling that of Lepidus in size and magnificence, full of adaptations from Græco-Asiatic designs, with reception and drawing-rooms, a library, a palaestra, and even a bath-room with stucco ornamentation and wall paintings.§ The habit of corresponding by letter began to be widespread; through the desire for intercourse between friend and friend, and the impatience to find out what was happening in Rome or in the provinces, confidential slaves were frequently despatched into the most distant parts of the Empire. Invitations to dinner or to stay in the country became a usual form of entertainment, and a generous standard of hospitality came to be regarded as obligatory. Men no longer travelled with a small suite, but attended by a huge retinue of slaves.¶ Funerals became increasingly costly, and it became fashionable to erect huge family monuments upon the main roads of Italy,** to attract the attention of the passing public. With the changes in the prevailing style of jewellery and in the variety and the cost of the fashionable stuffs,†† dress, too, became more distinctive and costly. The wealthy class in Rome and all over Italy began to conform to that conventional code of propriety by which the rich seem always destined, in the progress of civilisation, to become more and more enslaved, till finally they lost all feeling for what is serious and genuine in life. The new generation followed their example with alacrity, and preached the new conventions with a passionate vehemence which must have been highly exasperating to those of their seniors who were still attached to the simplicity of primitive manners. Amongst those who protested against this development there was, however, one prominent figure of

77 B.C.

The new fashions.

* Corn. Nep., Att., xiii. 3; Cic., ad F., xiii. 77, 3. Marquardt, V. P. R., i. 177.

† Suet., Cæs., 4; Seneca De Ben., iii. 24.

‡ Cic. in Pis., xxvii. 67.

§ Schiller-Voigt, 394; Plin., N. H., xxxvi. 15, 110; Friedländer, S. G. R., iii. 88.

¶ Suet., Cæs., 4; Plut., Cat. U., 12.

** Schiller-Voigt, 396.

†† *Id.* 405.

77 B.C. the younger age, Marcus Porcius Cato, a man of rich and noble family and a descendant of Cato the Censor. His puritan spirit revolted against the tyranny of fashion to which the golden youth of Rome wished to make him conform; he would walk in the streets without shoes or tunic, to accustom himself, as he said, only to blush at things which were shameful in themselves, and not merely by convention.*

The new intellectual movement.

Side by side with this new standard of luxury, the needs of the intellect began to claim closer attention. Amongst the upper classes of Italy we find widespread evidence of that burning thirst for knowledge which is characteristic of all the really great epochs of history. A young man of distinguished family like Cæsar could not complete his education without a stay of some years in Greece or in the East to attend a course of rhetoric, or the class of some well-known philosopher. Everyone learned to make speeches and to write in verse and prose, and there was a general desire for a wide and many-sided culture. Books were read upon all conceivable subjects, rhetoric, æsthetics, history, geography, agriculture, strategy, tactics, siege operations, philosophy, medicine; the encyclopædia of Aristotle, which Sulla had brought to Italy, suddenly came into an immense vogue.† It had been but little appreciated by the specialists of the last two centuries who had studied particular sciences like astronomy, mathematics and literary history in the restful solitudes of the big museums maintained by the Hellenistic sovereigns of the East; but it found a large and ready public of admirers now that the educated classes in Italy were conscious of the responsibilities of a world-wide Empire. There was a large class of men whose occupations can only be described as encyclopædic, who had been successively soldiers, statesmen, orators, judges, financiers, organisers of festivals or public works, admirals, landlords or ambassadors, and who needed to have at their command, not this or that special science, but a vast fund of general information which would enable them to pick up with rapidity any subject they desired. Aristotle, the philosopher of imperial expansion, the master first of Alexander and later of the Arabs, presented the Empire-builders of Italy with a vast and well-arranged

* Plut., Cat. U., 6.

† Varro, R. R., ii., 5, 13, says that to read Aristotle was almost a proverbial expression, meaning to be learned in the Greek sciences. See Cic. De Or., ii., xxxvi., 152; iii., xlvii., 182. Porzio in R. S. A., 1899, p. 227.

handbook of information, written in a plain and unadorned style, and stored not only with facts, but with a sufficient supply of those general ideas which, however imperfect in themselves, are yet indispensable to all who venture as pioneers into unknown regions, reminding them of the general direction in which they are moving and preventing them from changing their line of march at the first serious obstacle or rebuff. 77 B.C.

All this increase in luxury and expenditure among the upper classes was in itself an encouragement to the prevalent spirit of speculation. Sulla had indeed been able to re-establish the old Roman institutions; but the sentiment of aristocracy soon succumbed to the temptations of the new era, and even members of the old historic nobility were ready to forget their old repugnance for business undertakings. Financiers and landlords, blue-blooded aristocrats and parvenu millionaires, began to break down the old barriers of caste and rank, and to merge into a single class of enterprising traders and financiers, under conditions in which the old political antagonism between the knights and the Senate, the capitalist bourgeoisie and the ruling military aristocracy could not help becoming gradually effaced. **The new money-making class.**

At the same time a profound change was coming over the whole social economy of Italy. During the preceding half century Italian capital had by preference been sent abroad, more especially to Asia, where it had helped to exploit the recently conquered provinces; comparatively little had been invested in Italy upon agricultural purposes. Generally speaking, while the moderate landlords had in some cases endeavoured to effect improvements in cultivation, the large proprietors, who had taken over the lands of the impoverished small farmers, were too pre-occupied with increasing the acreage of their holdings to spend time and trouble over modernising their methods. They contented themselves with forming huge estates (*latifundia*) rudely cultivated by slaves, or with transforming the old yeomen into small farmers (*coloni*) who were contented to work on by the old superannuated processes. But now that the provinces, and particularly Asia, had been over-exploited by Italian financiers and ruined by a devastating war, they ceased to be so profitable a field for new investment, and capital began once more to flow back to the land. **The changes in rural life and economy.**

Thus it was that the wasted Italian countryside began to blossom once more into its old prosperity. The first signs of

77 B.C. fresh vigour had been manifest half a century ago; and another three or four generations were to pass before the whole miraculous transformation could be finally perfected. But it was during these few years, when a new life was pulsating through the cities of Italy that the spirit of enterprise and improvement burst the close confines of their walls and gave the decisive impulse to the rural revival.* It was the slave immigrants who were the chief agents in the reanimation of Italy. The great and moderate landlords continued to buy their field workers from abroad, but, with more capital at their disposal, displayed a care in their selection which would have been inexplicable to their fathers. Besides the ordinary human chattels purchased for hard manual labour and shut up at night in the fetid shelters or *Ergastula*, they took pains to acquire a certain number of highly skilled cultivators, who were less harshly treated and expected to amend the methods and increase the profits of cultivation.†

Slavery and the rural revival.

Vine and olive cultivation.

It was upon the vine and the olive that their efforts were most naturally expended. The world market for wine at this time was Rhodes, while Greece, the Aegean Islands and Asia Minor were the great wine-growing countries, the Burgundy and Champagne of the ancient world, which exported the drink of the gods to regions where the grape did not grow, or where the wealthier classes had no taste for the rough wine of the country. But their supremacy was no longer to remain unchallenged. Amongst the hordes of Oriental prisoners whom Sulla sold into Italy, or whom the pirates and Italian tax-farmers and merchants kidnapped and bought in Asia and packed off westwards for home employers, there were many peasants who understood the cultivation of the vine and the olive and all the processes in the making of wine and oil. Financiers, who had grown rich on tax-farming or army contracts or provincial money-lending, landlords and aristocrats who had a little capital to dispose of, were quick to realise that they might wrest their old monopoly from Greece and Asia and meet the increasing consumption of the Italian market. They proceeded to invest largely in Oriental slaves and employ them as planters of vines and olives wherever the district was favourable,‡ choosing situations near the sea or the roads, such as many parts of Sicily§ and the neighbour-

* Nissen, I. L., 458.
† See Varro, R. R., i., 17, 4 and 5; ii. 10, 4.
‡ Nissen, I. L., 439. § Varro, R. R., i. 2, 7.

hood of Faenza* in the plain of Romagna. Greater care too was expended upon the construction of farms, so that slaves could live and work there under healthier conditions.† 77 B.C.

Cattle breeding.

Another new development in Italian country life was scientific cattle-breeding. The Roman nobles of the previous generation had preferred to stake their money on nomadic prairie pasturage —a form of speculation dating back to the good old days of the Common Land, when the aristocracy paid little attention to business enterprise. But now that the price of land, and with it the cost of living, was steadily rising all over Italy, they were learning perforce to perfect their methods of rearing, to choose for their chief shepherds slaves of a certain measure of intelligence and knowledge, to study the breed of their animals, their intercrossing, their feeding, and their general health.‡ Many landlords devoted themselves to raising stock outside Italy, in thinly populated and barbarous districts: Atticus, for instance, possessed enormous lands and huge herds in Epirus.§ Experiments were also made in Italy in the direction of the selective breeding of the horse and the donkey.¶ Governors and officials made use of journeys undertaken for military and administrative purposes, to observe plants, animals and herds, and the particular treatment each required, asking questions of the natives, and bringing home much useful information.**

Various forms of speculation.

A large number of Italians, too, even among the aristocracy, devoted themselves to financial speculation, endeavouring by means of couriers and agents to lend money at high rates, especially in Asia, depositing capital for interest with bankers at Rome and Ephesus, and buying the debentures or shares (*partes* or *particulae*) of the syndicates of "publicans," who leased the public lands, the taxes and the military and civil contracts of the Empire.†† Others exploited workings of clay to manufacture bricks, and built houses in the capital which they let to the middle class or to the ever-growing swarms of the proletariat. Many speculations were made in Oriental slaves, who were skilful in those higher arts of production for which there was a steadily increasing demand. Others invested

* Franchina, *Le condizioni economiche della Sicilia di tempi di Verre*, Palermo, 1897. † Varro, R. R., i. 11, 15.

‡ See all the second book of Varro, esp. ii. 2, 7 ff.; ii. 3, 8 ff.; ii. 7, 16, ii. 10, 3; ii. 10, 10.

§ Varro, R. R., ii. pref., 6; ii. 2, 20; Corn. Nep. Att., xiv. 3.

¶ Varro, R. R., ii. 6, 1. ** Varro, R. R., ii., pref. 6.

†† Cic., Pro leg., Man., vi. 18; Val., Max., vi. 9, 7.

77 B.C. their money in grammarians, doctors, architects, master-masons or stucco workers, letting them out to any one who had need of them, or setting them free on condition that they reserved for their old patrons a part of their professional earnings.

The contagion of imperialism. The result of these many-sided activities may be stated very shortly. Rome like a great spider was sucking blood from the provinces. The Italian upper classes were engaged in weaving a vast web of financial interests to secure the treasure that they needed for their own growing demands. The middle class in the less important cities of Italy, less powerful but quite as greedy, hastened to ape their superiors. So did the class beneath them, the small farmers, the day labourers, the artizan immigrants from the East, the freedmen from all parts of the world, and all those who had been ruined by the Civil War. At Rome the rich were gradually infecting the whole community with their passion for amusement and good feeding, increasing the magnificence of the festivals which candidates and magistrates gave to the people, and the sumptuousness of the public banquets,* at which poor men learnt to appreciate the taste of good wine, as of thrushes, chickens, geese, and even peacocks.† In the small towns and in the country districts of Italy, the soldiers of Sulla had become living exponents of the vices and luxury of the East, of drunkenness and debauchery and the ostentation of riches.‡ Their example awoke slumbering instincts of adventure and commercial enterprise among the younger generation in the families of the smaller landlords and farmers. The poorer among them enlisted in the army, hoping to make a fortune in distant expeditions; others who had a little money, set themselves up in business;§ whilst others again who had inherited a tiny farm or allotment, tried to imitate their wealthier neighbours by the purchase of a slave or two, reckoning they would only have to sow the seed necessary to feed themselves and their dependents, and to plant vines, olives and fruit trees and a few flowers for the bees, in order to sell a fine store of produce and live a life of ease and comfort.¶ The increase of general expenditure among all classes gave a stimulus to the speculations of the rich capitalists and nobles, several of whom even embarked upon retail

* V. Cic. de Off., ii. 16, 57.
† Varro, R. R., iii. 6, 6; iii. 5, 8; iii. 2, 16.
‡ Sall., Cat., 11; Cic. in Cat., ii. 9, 20.
§ E.g. Ventidius Bassus, Aul. Gell., xv., 4.
¶ E.g. the father of Virgil (Donatus, p. 54, 10). See Varro, R. R. iii., 16, 10.

dealing, opening a shop in their palaces (like some of the Florentine nobles a generation ago) and there selling the produce of their estates through an assistant, who was generally a slave or a freedman. 77 B.C.

Thus the survivors of the Civil War had wooed back the old prosperity of Italy. The mercantile spirit was even more widespread and infectious than in the previous generation. There was a general rise in wages and prices, and in the value of land. Italy was passing through one of those happy periods of affluence when opportunities of profit arise one out of another and seem to multiply on all sides with progressive rapidity. Out of the depression and anarchy of the Revolution had emerged an era of plenty in which the competition of all the various elements in the community to acquire wealth, power and pleasure became even more breathless and exciting than in the preceding generation. The new Italian bourgeoisie composed of landlords and merchants, cultivated gentlemen and ambitious politicians, which had been slowly consolidating its power for the last half century, was becoming daily better fitted by wealth, capacity and education to contend with the hereditary republican aristocracy for the power and responsibilities of Empire. Meanwhile Cæsar was living quietly at Rhodes, deep in the study of orators and philosophers. **The bourgeoisie and the revival of prosperity.**

NOTE.—Many of the facts cited above as a proof of the beginning of this change in manners and social conditions belong to a considerably later period, but I have thought it justifiable to make use of them because I believe that the change which we find completed between 50 and 40 B.C. must have been begun between 80 and 70, at a period when the crisis of the revolution had been surmounted, and a new generation with new capacities was at hand to continue the work of its predecessors. It may be added that Varro, in the valuable book upon agriculture from which I have quoted so frequently, is summing up the progress made during the whole of his generation.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONQUEST OF BITHYNIA

Change in political opinion—Extinction of revolutionary spirit in the middle class and strength of the patriotic and democratic sentiment—Opposition to the Conservative party—The tribunes open the attack on Sulla's constitution—Death and will of the King of Bithynia ; the financial interests involved—Imminence of a war with Mithridates ; intrigues at Rome for the command—Lucius Licinius Lucullus—Precia, mistress of Cethegus ; "the new woman"—Unexpected invasion of Asia and Bithynia by Mithridates—The distribution of the Roman commands—Hurried departure of Lucullus for the East—Prudent strategy of Lucullus—Mithridates' march on Cyzicus—The double siege of Cyzicus—Destruction of Mithridates' army.

Political effects of these changes :

THIS great and rapid transformation of social life and conditions entailed corresponding adjustments in the sphere of politics. It was inevitable from the first that Sulla's settlement should be merely temporary and provisional. As the old generation passed away from the scene, the classes and parties which had contended so violently but a few years before, laid aside their animosities and drew together almost unconsciously in a common mood of conciliation. The Italian middle class learnt to abate the revolutionary and anti-Roman enthusiasm which had involved their country in the miseries of the Social War and driven hundreds of their countrymen to join the army of Mithridates. The healing process of time and the general increase and diffusion of prosperity slowly appeased the agitation of a class which had long been devoted to Roman interests and was imbued with Italian patriotism and Italian good sense. As they planted their vines and olives, built farms and cottages, bought slaves out of their savings, or enlisted in the legions, the small landlords and labourers, the merchants and contractors all over Italy became the supporters, sometimes even the devoted partisans, of order and the established authority.

They forgot the great services which the Revolution had rendered to their cause; they branded as traitors the many enthusiasts of the preceding generation whom distress and persecution had driven to the banners of Mithridates; they abandoned Sertorius, the last surviving champion of the Marian party and the revolutionary movement. A few trifling successes over Sertorius were enough to win Pompey a lasting popularity in all parts of the peninsula. 77 B.C. On the Italian middle-class.

Meanwhile the rich classes and even the aristocracy itself were gradually losing much of their reactionary fervour. The Social War, the reduction of debts, even Sulla's proscriptions were becoming dim and distant memories. Men began to be convinced that the talk of a coming revolution was mere idle chatter. They saw that the emancipation of Italy, a reform which was for some fifty years the bugbear of the Conservatives, had been carried through without any of the calamities predicted. Although the number of electors had been increased and was now almost 900,000, the small oligarchy of resident voters at Rome, whose opposition to an extended franchise had precipitated the whole crisis, found that it still remained, as before, the controlling force in the government of the Empire. As the elections could only be held at Rome, voters who lived in other parts of Italy were unable to undertake the long journey to the capital several times during the year; until some reform was passed to abolish the present centralised system, they were practically debarred from using their privileges. But all agitation in this direction had been severely kept under during Sulla's reign of terror, and other interests very soon intervened to make the majority of the new voters quite indifferent to the exercise of the rights for which they had fought. A generation ago, the extension of the franchise had seemed a panacea for every evil, and all parties in turn had found in it a battle cry for rousing the public to political enthusiasm. But now that opportunities of money-making had become so much more frequent, the middle class preferred to emigrate to the provinces, or, if they stayed in Italy, to stick to their own proper business of growing rich. It seemed foolish to waste time over political conflicts in which the ordinary voter found it difficult to remain constant to any definite aim, when it was within the reach of any member of the community, by attending to his private affairs, to rise high on the social ladder. Of all the privileges that Roman citizenship brought with it, the right to vote at elections was On the aristocracy.

77 B.C. that by which most men set least store. They were content to leave the political offices in the gift or the sale of the small oligarchy of residents; in other words, in the control of the Roman upper classes.

The Roman Electorate.

For in the capital the middle class, so predominant in the Italian country towns, was practically non-existent. The vast majority of the Roman electorate was composed of an indigent class, either free or freedmen, which made a precarious livelihood as a parasite upon the upper ranks of society, its members finding employment in the State services or contracts, or working as masons, weavers, waggoners, stone-cutters or gardeners, or living as clients or dependents of the wealthy houses. It was thus perfectly simple for the moneyed classes, provided only they remained united and homogeneous, to keep a firm hold over the needy proletariat of electors, and to secure the success of their own favoured candidates. A man of rich or noble family, who had connections with the aristocracy or with the world of finance, could thus almost make sure of being elected to office: the only opposition he need fear would be from rivals in his own class. So the extension of the franchise had only strengthened its old opponents. The old Roman oligarchy of Senators and knights, bound together by ties of friendship and very often of marriage, was left, in the growing indifference of the Italian middle class, practically undisputed master of the great executive offices, and of the government of Italy and the Empire.

Sulla's work stultified.

The rulers soon discovered the new basis of their power, which Sulla, blinded by his passion against the revolutionaries, had been unable to descry. Its detection led to a very curious result. It made the whole elaborate buttress work of Sulla's constitutional structure seem artificial and even precarious as a safeguard of aristocracy. The younger members of the caste were quick to draw the inference. They argued that his settlement was neither secure nor efficient, and utterly unsuited to the needs of the age. Some of the older men, of course, saw matters very differently. In many of the great houses Sulla's reaction had provoked an outburst of exaggerated Conservative feeling; there was a section of the nobility which again tried to keep to itself, to avoid, so far as possible, all contact with their inferiors, and to behave and speak as if all the Italians were still in the position of humble dependants. But circumstances were too strong for these childish eccentricities. As the proscriptions were slowly

forgotten, clear-sighted observers were forced to admit that the wealth of the knights was indispensable to the supremacy of the aristocracy. But the knights, whose powers had been curtailed and dignity wounded by Sulla and his partisans, could not be expected to remain loyal to the existing *régime*. Yet they could sway the electorate, and some concession to their demands could not long be delayed. It was the same, in a lesser degree, as regards the Italian middle class. It might make small use of the franchise; but it had earned in the Social War its good right to consideration. It was impossible to behave as though the Revolution had never been. The public opinion of Italy was a force to be reckoned with; it represented the homes from which the Government drew almost all its common soldiers, its centurions and its subalterns. But the Italian middle class felt no respect for its rulers: the reverent awe of old days was a memory of the past. If it obeyed the law and was in no mood for revolution, its detestation of Sulla's settlement was sincere and implacable.

77 B.C.

The Knights and the Italians.

The effect of these tendencies became increasingly apparent during the time when Cæsar was studying at Rhodes. The ruling cabal, exclusive, helpless and corrupt, with a brutal and sinister record behind it, was becoming detested throughout the whole length of Italy. Even among its own nominal supporters disaffection was widespread. The abominable behaviour of the provincial governors, the corruption of the senatorial tribunals, the odious intrigues for *legationes liberæ** excited general disgust. Moreover there had been a wearisome succession of blunders and panics, intrigues and scandals, to exasperate an already restless public. The most vital interests were shamefully neglected; Mithridates was allowed time quietly to mature his revenge; the pirates continued to capture Roman citizens on the high seas. In Spain Sertorius advanced from triumph to triumph. The Senators who had not been able to prevent Pompey from taking command, indignant at the promotion of so young a rival, did their best to make his enterprise a failure by refusing to vote the necessary funds, and Pompey had himself to advance the sums necessary for his soldiers and equipment.† Italy, young, lusty and self-confident, was clamouring for conquests; but her

The Senatorial record.

* The name given to a privilege sometimes granted by the Senate to one of its members allowing him to travel *gratis*, even upon private affairs, and obtain free lodgings and means of transport in the provinces for himself and his suite.

† Plut., Pomp., 20.

76–5 B.C. drowsy rulers had mistaken her mood. It was now some years since Rome had displayed any signs of real energy on her frontiers. There had been a petty expedition under Appius Claudius, Pro-Consul of Macedonia, into Thrace, and another small campaign against the Dardani under Caius Scribonius Curio, who had advanced as far north as the Danube. There had also been a small war in Dalmatia which had ended in the capture of Salona. But this exhausted the record of senatorial achievements. Amid the inertia of his successors the exploits of Sulla were forgotten and even the nobility harked back to the memories of his rival. Marius no doubt had tampered with revolution, but at least he had given Rome a new Army and led a loyal democracy to victory over the invader.* Men were more and more disgusted with the provincial exactions of the ruling clique, and the undisguised venality which reigned supreme in the Senate and the tribunals. They looked back with longing on the free speech of former days; they forgave the blunders of the old popular champions, and remembered only how they had caused evil-doers in office to tremble at their invective.† Year after year some violent tribune, Lucius Licinius in 76, Quintus Opimius in 75, each bolder than the last, incited the people against the Sullan Constitution and the aristocratic tribunals.‡ At last, in 75, the Consul, Caius Aurelius Cotta, uncle of Cæsar, won the first success in the new struggle by abolishing Sulla's provision that a Tribune of the people should be ineligible for any other office.§

Foreign policy of the Cabal.

The Bithynian bequest.

The results of this movement were to be most strikingly exhibited in the field of foreign policy; the decisive change took place during the years when Cæsar was still at Rhodes. Towards the end of the year 75 or the beginning of the next,‖ King Nicomedes of Bithynia died bequeathing his kingdom and all that was in it to the Roman State. Bithynia was the buffer-State between Rome and Pontus, and perhaps the malign old Oriental felt a grim satisfaction at the storm he must have known would rage around his tomb. This was the second bequest within quite a short time which had fallen to the Senate; but Bithynia was less easily dealt with than Egypt, for its acceptance was certain to involve war with Mithridates. The King of Pontus could not permit a Roman

* Nap., iii., J. C. i., 282; see Dion, Cass., xxxvi. 32 (speech of Catulus) and Cic., in Verr., A. ii. iii. 35, 81; pro Rab., Perd. x, 29.

† Cic. Verr. A.I. xv. 44; *Id.* Pro Cluentio, xxviii, 77.

‡ Lange, R. A., iii. 175. § Drümann, G. R., iv. 385.

‖ See Appendix B.

occupation of Bithynia without endangering his prestige among the Eastern nations. After the timidity and indifference it had recently displayed regarding Egypt, the Senate was at a loss how to act. Its first inclination apparently was to refuse the legacy; but public opinion soon interfered to forbid it. Already in the reign of the late king, Roman financiers had begun to find their way into Bithynia and knew something of its resources.* Nicomedes had owned a vast domain of Crown lands with mines and fisheries of very considerable value which annexation would put at the disposal of Italian capitalists, while considerable profits might also be expected from the taxes of the rich Greek cities on the coast.† With this tempting bait within reach Rome's destiny of conquest seemed too manifest to be evaded. A patriotic agitation of the familiar sort was set on foot. War with Mithridates was in any case only a question of years‡ and no good Roman could be in two minds about avenging Dardanus. The Senate was finally compelled to annex Bithynia and to declare the son of Nicomedes illegitimate. A syndicate was immediately formed at Rome to administer the possessions of the Bithynian crown,§ and disputes arose over the command of a war which seemed likely to be rich in profit and glory. 75 B.C.

One of the Consuls for the year happened to be a certain Lucius Licinius Lucullus, member of a family which could lay claim both to fame and notoriety. His father was suspected of foul play during the Sicilian slave revolt of 102 and his mother, the sister of Metellus Numidicus, had been accused of infidelity. His grandfather had been mixed up during his Consulship in a robbery of statues, while his great-grandfather had been indicted when Ædile for concocting a false accusation.‖ The record is so sinister that its veracity may be questioned. It is indeed not impossible that the charges have been invented or at least magnified by the embitterment of feeling during the revolutionary era. It is certain, at any rate, that the family, despite its nobility, was poor, and that Lucius, like his younger brother Marcus, though he received a very careful literary education, grew up in modest surroundings and with simple habits, imbued from boyhood with all the pride of his caste and with the Conservative principles of Lucullus.

* Suet., Cæs., 49. † Cic., De Leg. Agr., 2, xv. 40; 2, xix. 50.
‡ Plut., Luc., 5.
§ Cic., De Leg. Agr., 2, xix. 50 Cicero probably alludes to it again in ad. F. xiii. 9. ‖ Drümann, G. R., iv. 119, 120.

75 B.C. the old Roman nobility. During his youth he had taken some part in the terrible class conflicts which preceded the revolution; though in matters of the intellect a passionate Hellenist, he took his stand in politics, with all the better elements of the poorer nobility, on the side of Rutilius Rufus and the party opposed to all the new social forces, whether democratic or capitalist. He had married a wife who brought him no dowry, though a member of a very aristocratic family: Clodia, daughter of Appius Claudius, Consul in 79, Prætor after the Civil War in 77, who in 76 had obtained the government of Africa, coming home with a reputation for upright administration.* Able, resolute and energetic, he had been, as we have seen, one of the few members of the aristocracy who took part in the Civil War. He had distinguished himself as one of Sulla's lieutenants in his Eastern campaigns, fought recklessly against the revolutionaries, and yet, despite his poverty, took no part in the wholesale plundering of the vanquished. Lucullus, in short, was one of the few who, in a world of unscrupulous adventurers, represented with sincerity and conviction the one respectable element in Sulla's government, the primitive and genuine aristocratic tradition which had been brought back to power with such disappointing results. Ambitious, intelligent and honest, though sometimes over-arrogant and passionate, quick to take action, but little gifted with subtlety and with no experience of dissimulation and intrigue, he had hitherto been unswerving in his devotion to the principles of Rutilius Rufus. He had offered a vigorous opposition to all attempts made to overturn the Constitution of Sulla, yet at the same time without showing the least consideration or indulgence towards the baser elements of the ruling *régime*, the vicious and needy aristocracy and their parasites. He had had several violent altercations with Lucius Quintius, tribune of the people in 75, and with the notorious Publius Cethegus, one of the most prominent agents of the existing cabal, who had originally deserted from the party of Marius to enrich himself over the proscriptions, and was now like many another influential scoundrel under similar *régimes*, universally detested in secret, but treated by the aristocracy on all public occasions with a respect not unmingled with awe.† By this old fashioned and uncompromising attitude Lucullus had not unnaturally

* Drümann, G. R., iv. 123, 124.

† Plut., Luc., 5; see Drümann, G. R., 2, 557.

attracted to himself the impartial hostility of all parties in the community. 75 B.C.

The Cilician vacancy.

When the question of a war with Mithridates came up for discussion Lucullus considered that there was no one more entitled than himself to the command. He had already once conducted operations against Mithridates under Sulla, and was completely conversant with Eastern affairs. Unfortunately the Consular provinces had already been distributed and the lot had designed him for Cisalpine Gaul. Moreover, there were numerous candidates for the command. Besides his own colleague Cotta, there was Marcus Antonius, son of the great orator, who had been Prætor in the preceding year; and possibly also Pompey, who was still in Spain but, indignant at the dilatory support of the Senate, was threatening to return to the capital with his legions.* At this opportune moment news arrived of the death of Lucius Octavius, Governor of Cilicia. Lucullus at once conceived the idea of exchanging Gaul for Cilicia; for the Governor of Cilicia would certainly be entrusted with the duty of invading Pontus through Cappadocia,† and nobody at Rome doubted that it would be easy to carry the war triumphantly into the enemy's country. But the redistribution of the provinces was by no means easy to manage. Lucullus had far more enemies than friends in influential circles, and excitement was running high at Rome over the command. There was a general feeling that this campaign would mark the end of the old timid and negative policy, and there was a host of competitors ambitious for its laurels.

The New Woman at Rome.

Lucullus realised that the moment was decisive for his future, perhaps also for that of his party, and resolved for once to let ambition take precedence over prejudice. To the amazement of fashionable circles he began to intrigue in his own interest with a keenness and subtlety for which no one would have given him credit. Throughout Italian society the women had been far more Conservative than the men in maintaining the customs and feelings of older generations. In many of the noble houses there were still Roman matrons, like the mother of Cæsar, who lived in a primitive and old-world simplicity, even preferring to keep up the old-fashioned pronunciation of Latin, which had long ago become clipped and vulgarised by the cosmopolitan chatter of the tavern and the market place. But the all-pervading influences in Italian

* Plut., Pomp., 20. † Plut., Luc., 6.

75 B.C. society were beginning to leave their mark even upon the women. The perversions which are introduced into the feminine world by a rich and mercantile civilisation and the culture and pleasures which accompany it, were no longer a novelty in Roman houses. They brought with them all the familiar corruptions—the shameless venality of fashionable ladies who rely for their expenditure upon the attentions of their admirers; the ascendancy of skilful and depraved intriguers over victims enervated by self-indulgence and sensitive to all the arts and witchery of seduction; the open rivalry between young competitors for dowries; the tyranny of rich wives over impecunious husbands; the tendency of women to live the same life as men, to study and to speculate, to ride and to play, and even to dabble with delight in the muddy waters of politics. Amongst the prominent representatives of the "new women" at Rome at this time was a certain Precia, a clever specimen of her class, who, thanks to a number of illustrious lovers and above all to the notorious Cethegus, was in a position to dispose of extensive influence. This was the woman whom Lucullus selected to be his instrument. He condescended to compete with Antonius and probably a good many others for her kindness, seconding his appeals with the substantial compliments of the day. He even made his peace with his old enemy Quintius and bought his favour at a considerable price.* Precia deigned to be moved by these assiduous attentions from the proudest of Roman aristocrats, and undertook to promote a reconciliation between Cethegus and Lucullus. The rest was easy.

Mithridates and Sertorius.

Fortune came to the assistance of the fair intriguer and her admirers. Mithridates had already for some time been preparing for a new attack upon Rome. He had accumulated huge supplies of money, and won the support of the barbarians of Thrace and the Greek cities in the north-west of the Black Sea, including Apollonia, Odessus and Tomi. Moreover, through the intervention of Lucius Fannius and Lucius Magius, two ex-officers of Fimbria, who had taken refuge at his court after the murder of their general, he had actually concluded an alliance with Sertorius; the stipulations were that Asia was to remain Roman, while Bithynia, Paphlagonia and Cappadocia were to go to Mithridates, who was to furnish Sertorius with 4,000 talents and forty ships, in return for the services of a Roman general, Marcus Marius.† But the death and testament of Nicomedes forced the King's hand, and drove

* Plut., Luc., 6. † Plut., Sert., 23–24.

him to premature and precipitate action. In the spring of 74,* while the metropolis was still quietly discussing who should take command in the far-away Eastern campaign, Mithridates surprised his enemies by taking the field with an army of 120,000 men and 16,000 cavalry.† 74 B.C.

The invasion of Asia.

He despatched part of his forces under Taxiles and Hermocrates to invade Bithynia, where they drove a swarm of Italian concession hunters and traders before them to take refuge in Chalcedon. At the head of the rest of his army he marched into the Roman province of Asia, no longer, as on the preceding occasion, as an Oriental conqueror, but as the ally of the Roman Sertorius. Every town on occupation was solemnly liberated by Marcus Marius, acting as pro-Consul, in the name of Sertorius, and exempted from the payment of part of its taxes.‡ Finally, in the hope of exciting a general revolt, he sent out small flying columns of cavalry under the orders of Eumachus,§ Fannius and Metrophanes,‖ in different directions across great Phrygia into Cilicia and to the recently subjugated Isaurians of Mount Taurus.¶ The significance of this strategy is unmistakable. Mithridates was returning to his old policy of raising up against Rome a great democratic and proletarian revolution. If his success was not so striking as on the former occasion it was still at first very considerable. In Asia several towns on the Sea of Marmora, including Parium, Lampsacus and Priapus, surrendered to Marcus Marius. In Bithynia all the towns, aghast at the sudden inrush of grasping traders from Italy, declared for Mithridates, with the single exception of Chalcedon, which was probably only prevented from doing so by the exertions of the resident Roman population. The fear of a new proletarian revolution spread far and wide through Asia. It was an ominous situation. The only troops in the province were the two old legions of Fimbria under the orders of a simple pro-Prætor, while the two legions in Cilicia had been left without a leader by the death of their pro-Consul. The towns which remained loyal hastily improvised defences,

* For the chronology of the war, see Appendix B.

† Reinach, M. E., 322.

‡ Plut., Sert., 24.

§ App., Mithr., 75.

‖ Oros, vi. 2, 16.

¶ That these must have been small detachments of cavalry, and not a large force (as Reinach, M. E., 328, asserts of the troops under Eumachus), is clear from Oros, vi. 2, 16. Small cavalry columns would be far more useful than a large army for the particular mission entrusted to these commanders, which was to excite the population to revolt by passing rapidly through large districts defended by small garrisons, or entirely denuded of troops.

74 B.C. and Cæsar, his military ambitions rekindled by the outbreak of hostilities, interrupted his studies in oratory, hurried from Rhodes to the continent, and formed a small militia to check the rebellion in the towns of Caria.* His behaviour was less important for what it achieved than for what it signified. It showed that he had definitely broken with Sertorius and the survivors of his uncle's party, and regarded himself as a true Constitutionalist—an adversary of the revolutionary and anti-Roman programme, and a partisan of the new policy the primary object of which was to increase the prestige of Rome.

The distribution of commands.

This unexpected invasion caused all the more alarm because of the painful memories it re-awakened in Italy. The Government at once threw off all hesitation and prepared to act with promptitude and vigour. Every one believed the danger to be as great now as it had been in 88; and it was at once felt that it was impossible to leave Asia at such a moment to a pro-Prætor with two legions, or to allow Cilicia to be without a Governor till the following year. Lucullus, who had won his spurs in the previous war, was universally considered the man for the post. Thus Precia was able to carry through her contemplated arrangements to the satisfaction of all parties. Pompey was given funds to continue his operations against Sertorius; Antonius was made admiral of the fleet with a command over the whole coastline and the special duty of tracking the pirates to their Cretan stronghold; Cotta was ordered to defend Bithynia and the Sea of Marmora; whilst Lucullus was made pro-Consul of Cilicia, and entrusted with the task of driving Mithridates out of Asia, with the two legions of Asia and a legion of conscripts recruited in Italy.† This was a great success in the sphere of drawing-room diplomacy; but incidentally it involved a serious military blunder, dividing the operations of the campaign between three generals, without giving any one of them the supreme command.

The revolution misses fire.

The danger was pressing and the two Consuls hastened their departure; it was probably about the end of spring, or the beginning of summer, when they left Rome. Lucullus sailed to Asia with his legions of conscripts; Cotta first collected a fleet from among the allies and then proceeded to Chalcedon, which was still in the hands of the Romans, intending to use it as his base of operations for the re-conquest of Bithynia. Lucullus found the situation in the province

* Suet., Cæs., 4.

† Cic. Pro Murena, xv. 33; Memnon, 37; Plut., Luc., 6.

less critical than had been thought in Italy, perhaps even more favourable than his own experience had led him to suppose. In spite of the suddenness of its outbreak, the revolution had not spread so quickly as on the previous occasion. The wealthy classes were not entirely unprepared for it, while among the common people the revolution of 88, with its miserable *dénouement*, was still a lively warning against disorder. None of the great cities had joined the revolt, and the large sea-port towns, notably Cyzicus, were prepared to fight to the death against the patron of the social revolution and the ally of the pirates. Moreover, Mithridates had been detained in the interior by the slow progress of the rebellion, and he did not now venture to advance very far into the province. It was therefore easy for Lucullus to bring up the two legions from Cilicia, to re-establish discipline in the old army of Fimbria, and to do something to alleviate the economic depression in the towns of Asia, while he continued to make arrangements for his impending campaign. 74 B.C.

The battle of Chalcedon.

He was engaged in these measures of preparation, when a serious disaster occurred in the North. It seems that Mithridates, having ascertained the destination of Cotta's fleet, hastily left the army of Asia, joined that of Bithynia, and led it to the attack of Chalcedon. Chalcedon was situated on the Bosphorus, opposite Byzantium, and the Roman fleet had been stationed in its harbour to intercept the Pontic ships carrying corn for the troops from the Black Sea into the Sea of Marmora. It is easy to imagine the panic in Chalcedon when Mithridates took up his station outside the town. The rich financiers who had fled there for refuge and were impatient to return to their business, fell upon the unfortunate Cotta with entreaties to march out boldly against Mithridates and strike a signal blow for the liberation of Bithynia. Cotta reluctantly yielded to civilian advice. After a battle which ended in a grave land defeat and in the loss of his entire fleet,* he was forced to shut himself up within the walls of the city.

Lucullus dogs Mithridates.

So signal a reverse at the very commencement of the campaign had at least the merit of establishing unity in the chief command. Lucullus, who had by now advanced with 30,000 men and 2500 cavalry† as far as the Sangarius, assumed the chief

* This is almost all that can be said about the battle of Chalcedon. The texts are fragmentary and discordant. *Cf.* App., Mith., 71 : Plut., Luc., 8 ; Oros, vi. 2, 13. See Reinach, M. E., 323.

† The figures given by Plut., Luc., 8 ; App., Mith., 72, says 1600 cavalry.

74 B.C. command of the entire operations on the Asiatic Continent. He refused to be dismayed at the news of the disaster. Turning a deaf ear to those who counselled the immediate invasion of Pontus, he continued his march against the Pontic army operating in Asia, to which Mithridates had no doubt returned after his victory at Chalcedon. But he realised the decisive importance with which the impending battle was now invested, and acted with the prudence of a consummate general. When his army approached Mithridates he sought first of all to obtain exact information as to the forces of the enemy. Finding them in a considerable superiority he decided not to stake all upon a single fight. He therefore bought up all the available supplies, loaded them up on his baggage-animals, and began to follow obstinately on the heels of Mithridates without ever accepting battle, retiring every evening into his camp, and using his cavalry to hamper the enemy in replenishing his supplies.*

Mithridates attacks Cyzicus.

Mithridates had only been partially successful in organising an army on the Roman model. In spite of the efforts of the numerous Italians whom he had taken into his service, he had been compelled once more to take the field with a large and unwieldy force, which it was difficult adequately to provision. His perplexities were increased at every step of his advance into Asia, as he drew further away from the Pontic harbours on the Black Sea to which his ships conveyed corn from the Crimea. The port of Lampsacus probably gave him but slight assistance, and the convoys which came by land moved so slowly and arrived so irregularly that the army often remained without bread for three or four days at a time.† Lucullus was soon enabled so to harass the enemy by attacks upon his already precarious communications, that Mithridates was faced with the necessity of retreating towards his base of supplies in the Pontic coast towns on the Black Sea. But to abandon the Roman province and all hope of a general rising, and to confine himself to defensive action in his own country, would be a disastrous confession of failure. Unwilling to acquiesce without a struggle, the proud monarch threw himself once more upon fortune, and attempted a manœuvre of characteristic daring. His plan involved nothing less than the seizure of Cyzicus, the most important harbour on the Sea of Marmora, the revival of the revolutionary movement in Asia, and the vigorous resumption of military operations in that province against

* Plut., Luc., 8. † Plut., Luc., 8; App., Mith., 72.

Lucullus, with Cyzicus as a base for the landing of supplies from Pontus. One evening he suddenly broke up his camp, moved off in silence, undetected by the army of Lucullus, and arrived at dawn, after a forced march, within sight of Cyzicus.* 74 B.C.

The double siege at Cyzicus.

He at once attempted a surprise attack. On its repulse he laid siege to the town by land and by sea. Lucullus had, of course, followed close on his heels, and Mithridates might have seized his long sought opportunity of giving battle to the Romans. But he did not dare to use against them the troops he needed to press the blockade, and was thus compelled to let himself be surrounded in his turn within a vast line of siege works and trenches without ever engaging in a regular engagement. He still hoped that he would ultimately be able to capture the city, and reckoned that he could keep open his communications by sea even if the Romans were to close them by land. A long and obstinate double siege ensued, during which the fortunes of war depended on the resistance of the Cyzicenes. If the town had capitulated, Mithridates would have commanded an excellent base of operations and could easily have driven Lucullus out of Asia. If on the other hand it held out, Mithridates might eventually find himself in terrible straits, enclosed between the besieged and Lucullus. Lucullus succeeded in reviving the courage of the Cyzicenes by giving them news of his presence. The siege dragged slowly on through the year. Mithridates remained obstinately on the defensive and allowed himself to be surprised by the coming of winter.. Month by month his situation grew more difficult. Storms interfered with his supplies, and bread and forage began to run low. The unburied corpses of men and animals poisoned the air, and a horrible epidemic broke out in the trenches.† But Mithridates, whose subordinates did not dare to undeceive him, closed his eyes to realities, and persisted in his determination to capture the city, even when his soldiers were being reduced to eating their fallen comrades. But at last even he was forced to recognise the truth. He decided to attempt a retreat by misleading the enemy. Directing the

* These events are well told by Plutarch (Luc., 8, 9), whose account is probably taken from Sallust. Appian (Mith., 72-73), is more confused. The march upon Cyzicus was risky, but it hardly deserves the criticisms many historians have brought against it. Short of retiring altogether, there was nothing else for Mithridates to do. His situation gives the key to the attempt, which is further explained in App., Mith., 73, and Cic., Pro Murena, xv. 33.

† Plut., Luc., 9-10; App., Mith., 73-5; Florus, iii. 5; Eutropius, vi. 6.

73 B.C. cavalry and baggage animals to move eastwards towards Bithynia, he himself took the coast road, and led his army westwards towards Lampsacus, where he hoped to form a junction with the fleet. It was a well-devised stratagem. Lucullus was enticed to march his army across the snow-covered plains in pursuit of the Pontic cavalry, which retired slowly before him. He caught up the baggage train at the passage of the Rindacus and cut it in pieces with enormous slaughter, taking 15,000 prisoners, 9,000 horses, a great number of beasts of burden and huge masses of booty. Then suddenly discovering that the greater part of the army must have fled in another direction, he turned as rapidly back.* Fortune came to his aid. Heavy rains had brought the army of Mithridates to a halt at the banks of the Edepus. Here it was overtaken and cut to pieces by Lucullus. Only a few stragglers succeeded in following their king to Lampsacus, where they were hastily embarked for home.† Thus Bithynia was reduced and Chalcedon relieved in the early months of 73 : and the first round of the struggle ended in a brilliant victory for the small but active and well-disciplined army of Rome over the numerous and unwieldy forces which Mithridates had in vain attempted to train on the Roman model. The loyalty or vacillation of the people of Asia and their refusal to listen to the propaganda of Mithridates had also been decisive factors in Lucullus' favour. Asia was henceforward reckoned to be an integral part of the Roman Empire.

Break-up of Mithridates' army.

* Plut., Luc., 11.

† As a matter of fact, Plutarch (Luc., 11) records these two retreats as attempted separately, with a certain interval of time between, as though they were in no way connected together. He is followed by Mommsen, R. G., iii. 59. If so, when Mithridates sent away his cavalry he was not yet thinking of retreat, in spite of Plutarch's statement to the contrary, but was only anxious to make more room in his camp; it was only later that he decided to raise the siege, not, as Plut. says, in consequence of the carnage at the Rindacus, but because his own situation was no longer tenable. In any case, the real flight was that westward towards Lampsacus, which is the only one mentioned by Appian (Mith., 76.)

CHAPTER VIII

THE INVASION OF PONTUS AND THE PRÆTORSHIP OF CRASSUS

Cæsar's return to Rome—State of public opinion—Revolt of Spartacus—Naval operations of Mithridates—Growing discontent with the Government—Cæsar enters political life—A Roman politician's day—Lucullus overruns Bithynia, and decides to invade Pontus—Character of Lucullus—Slave raiding in the plains of Pontus—End of the war against Sertorius—Victories of Spartacus—The scandal of the elections of 71—Marcus Licinius Crassus; his career and character—Directs the war against Spartacus and is victorious—Lucullus and his officers and soldiers—Capture and burning of Amisus.

Cæsar returns to Rome.

MEANWHILE, in the course of the year 73, Cæsar had returned to Rome. We do not know the upshot of his small expedition against Mithridates, but it is likely enough that when his fears of a general revolution proved groundless, he disbanded his small force soon after the arrival of Lucullus in Asia. He returned to Rome shortly afterwards on the news that he had been elected Pontifex in the place of his uncle Caius Aurelius Cotta, who had lately died in Gaul.

Change in the Italian character.

Cæsar must have found the situation at home very different from what it had been on his return from his earlier journey. Much had happened in Italy during his absence; but the alteration he probably noticed most of all was in the character of his fellow countrymen. Here the change had indeed been both rapid and far-reaching. The action and interaction of a number of causes—the increase of prosperity, the diffusion of culture, the rise in the standard of comfort and luxury, the intermingling of the races in different parts of the Peninsula—in a word, the general progress of what we call civilisation had now finally completed a transformation in the Italian character which had been preparing for at least a century. In the old days, Italy had been a nation of peasants with few needs and as few ideas: the typical Italian qualities had been

73 B.C. patience, doggedness, and a certain impenetrable toughness of fibre. But of late years the Italian had become nervous excitable and unbalanced. He seemed continually to be oscillating between the opposite poles of character—between an egoism brutalised by sensuality and a moral sensibility sharpened by education and refinement, between wild and spasmodic outbursts of pride and cruelty, and the lingering influences of patriotism, piety and justice, to which he was acutely and morbidly responsive whenever personal pleasures and ambitions remained unaffected. It was a condition with which the modern world is painfully familiar. Italy was living through the fever of moral disintegration and incoherence which assails all civilised societies that are rich in the manifold resources of culture and enjoyment, but tolerate few or no restraints upon the feverish struggle of contending appetites.

Measures against famine at Rome.

The change, which was felt throughout the peninsula, was of course more particularly noticeable in the metropolis, where it stirred up new bitterness against Senatorial inefficiency. The people of Rome had one especial reason for discontent in the increasing frequency of famines; that of the year 75 had been particularly severe.* It must be remembered that while the population of the city was steadily on the increase, wheat was steadily being replaced by the vine and the olive in all parts of Italy, and scarcely enough was now produced to satisfy the needs of the country classes. The problem of supplying the metropolis thus became more difficult every year. The complaints brought against the negligence of the government were so loud and numerous that the two Consuls of that year, Caius Cassius Longinus and Marcus Terentius Licinianus Varro, the younger brother of Lucullus and adopted son of Marcus Terentius Varro, though Conservatives in politics, proposed a law to increase the tribute of corn supplied by the Sicilians. The towns which were already subject to a tribute of one-tenth were to furnish another tenth, which was to be bought from them at the rate of 3 sesterces a bushel, while the towns exempt from the tribute were to send to Rome nearly 200,000 bushels of corn, which were to be paid for at the rate of 3½ sesterces a bushel.† Thus what with corn given gratuitously and corn supplied at a fancy price, Sicily would be sending

* Cic. Pro Planc. 26, 64.
† Cic. in Verr., A., ii. 3, 70, 163.

over every year about 1,650,000 bushels,* enough even to satisfy the grumbling proletariat of Rome. 73 B.C.

Rising of Spartacus.

But far more serious anxieties were in store for the Government. A band of slaves, runaways from a school of gladiators at Capua, had developed, under the leadership of a Thracian called Spartacus, into a small but formidable army, which had attacked and defeated several legions hastily despatched to disperse it. As an exceedingly large number of slaves had recently been imported into the country and Italians had not yet learned the secret of discipline, all the bolder and more violent spirits began to escape from their masters and join the standard of Spartacus. For a moment Italy seemed face to face with the prospect of a huge slave rising.

Naval operations of Mithridates.

There were other losses too to set off against the triumphs of Lucullus. Marcus Antonius had utterly failed in his projected enterprise against Crete, and had finally, after some desultory ravaging in Sicily, suffered a complete defeat at the hands of the pirates.† Great therefore, was the consternation when a short time afterwards news reached Rome that Mithridates, defeated by land, was vigorously re-opening operations by sea with the help of his old friends and allies among the States and tribes of Thrace.‡ While Lucullus' two subordinates, Caius Valerius Triarius and Barba, were marching against the towns in Bithynia which were still holding out against Rome, Mithridates had devastated the coasts of the Sea of Marmora, besieged Perinthus, threatened Byzantium and sent a part of his fleet into the Ægean under the orders of Marius, to join hands with the pirates of Crete and Spain.

Strengthening of Lucullus' command.

This was very serious news. The Ægean fleet might very well be directed against Italy, and the coastline, it was recollected, was entirely undefended.§ Furious reproaches were brought against the Senate and the magistrates for their criminal neglect of the public interest. The Senate took hurried steps to meet the situation. It decided that the Consul Marcus Lucullus should be sent to Thrace next year as pro-Consul with a large army to crush the allies of Mithridates in those districts.‖ It allowed his brother Lucius 3,000 talents for the construction of a fleet—as if a fleet could be turned out in a night and a day—prolonging his command by a year, and

* Ciccotti, P. V., 63. † Drümann, G. R., i², 45.
‡ Bernhardt, C. M. K., 23 f.
§ Reinach, M. E., 322 ff.; Cic., Pro Mur., xv., 33.
‖ Bernhardt, C. M. K., 25.

73 B.C. perhaps also entrusting him with the government of Bithynia with Cotta for his subordinate.* Circumstances had now, in fact, compelled it to do what its own common sense should have suggested at the beginning of the operations—to put the military and naval commands into one hand.

The new party of efficiency.

All these events intensified the discontent against the existing *régime*, which had now become widespread among all classes of the community. Their reaction was soon felt in the world of politics. They helped to complete the re-constitution of the old Democratic party, which now re-emerged into prominence upon a new basis and in a changed form. It was no longer a motley assemblage of bankrupts and desperadoes agitating for a social revolution, but a sober and orderly body composed of men from the upper and middle classes, claiming before all to be efficient in its methods and constitutional in its aims. What it demanded was simply a more upright and energetic administration: to be saved from the barefaced exactions of extortionate officials and the perilous intimidation of revolting slaves. Many of the best houses soon became something very like Opposition clubs, where young men made passionate speeches in favour of restoring the democratic Constitution and revived the old battle-cries of Gracchan reform. One of their favourite meeting places was the house of Servilia, the young, witty and intellectual widow of the Marcus Brutus who had been killed by Pompey in the revolution of 78. She had contracted a second marriage with Decimus Junius Silanus, an aristocrat of advanced ideas, who kept open house for all the ardent spirits in the upper ranks of society,† conspicuous amongst whom was, of course, Cæsar. Cæsar was indeed beginning to find his way into houses which had been very unwilling to welcome him on his first return from the East. About this time he was elected by the people a *tribunus militum*, an appointment carrying with it the command of a thousand men in time of war. It was now all in his favour to be the nephew of Marius. He began to look round for the chance of some stroke of popularity which would launch him successfully upon a political career.

* It is difficult to determine the gradual increase of Lucullus' powers, but it seems probable that the Bithynian governorship was given him after the relief of Cyzicus and Chalcedon. What is certain is that the definitive conquest of Bithynia was made by Lucullus, and that Cotta, even if not actually under his orders, was henceforward only entrusted with secondary commands, such as the siege of Heraclea.

† Bynum, L. M. I. B., 11.

This was no easy task even for a nephew of Marius. The Roman electorate numbered at this time some 910,000 voters* Only a part of this total, however, was resident at Rome, and the remainder, who were scattered up and down the country, could not be relied upon to come up for the annual elections. This alone introduced a great element of uncertainty into the voting, which was intensified by the nature of the resident electorate itself. The larger part of it consisted of the proletariat: that is to say of small shopkeepers and workmen, clients and dependents of men in high station, petty officials occupying posts in the administration reserved for free citizens, and the familiar derelict assemblage of unemployed and unemployable loafers and beggars. Few of these would scruple to sell their vote for a consideration. Skilful wire-pullers had thus gradually been enabled to elevate dealing in votes to the level of a regular trade. They formed the dregs of the electorate into organised clubs or "colleges," and made sure of their men by a careful system of free dinners and petty largess. They then sold their votes by contract to the several candidates, with complicated precautions to ensure the faithful execution of promises.† The remainder of the electorate, on the other hand, consisting of the well-to-do bourgeoisie in Rome and Italy, the contractors and tax-farmers, merchants and landowners, wealthy freedmen and men of leisure and culture, rendered vain and capricious by their sense of power and the varied intellectual influences of the time, voted, when they voted at all, for some candidate they happened to like or to respect, on the inspiration of some momentary enthusiasm or animosity, or of some item of intelligence, whether true or false, which chanced to be circulated at the time of the elections. The treacherous breeze of popular favour might thus veer round from one hour to the next. The merest trifle, a well-placed rumour or a fortunate phrase, would sometimes alter all the probabilities of the situation between night and morning, leading perhaps, by some sudden freak of popular feeling, to a result which was equally surprising to all parties concerned.

73 B.C.

The chances of a Roman election.

To acquire influence over so fluid and heterogeneous a body of electors, unassisted by the ruling caste, was no easy matter. Cæsar began by serving a sedulous apprenticeship in that forced labour of adulation to which all Roman politicians of that day were condemned. He rose from his bed at dawn to

A Roman politician's day.

* Phlegon, fr. 12 (the figures refer to the year 69).

† Cic. in Verr., A., i. viii., 21; *de Petit consul*, v. 19.

73 B.C. receive every busybody or nonentity in Rome or from the country who cared to come either simply to pay his respects to a man of influence and reputation, or with the more practical object of demanding his assistance in a law-suit or asking for pecuniary help, or for the farming of some tax, or for exemption from military service, or for a letter of introduction to the Governor of some distant province. He then went down still early into the Forum to plead causes, or to have a word with a magistrate or Senator or banker in the interests of some unfortunate client. The rest of his day was spent in the same laborious tedium. He allowed himself to be stopped in the street by any worthy citizen who chose to claim his acquaintance, racked his over-laden memory to recollect who he might be, or employed the indispensable services of the slave or *nomenclator*, whose special business it was to remember the names of the greatest possible number of electors and to prompt his master so skilfully as to give the elector the illusion of being known by sight. He kept a pleasantry or a compliment or a promise ready on his lips for all comers, invited necessary acquaintances to dinner every evening, put in an appearance at the marriages, funerals, and family festivals of all classes of citizens, worked in support of some particular candidate in every election that took place, and gave hospitality in his house or provided regular assistance for a certain number of dependents from amongst the poorer classes in Rome, who served as his spies amongst the people, as his agents during elections, as a claque during his speeches in the Forum, or as his cut-throats in any personal quarrel.

Reduction of Bithynia.

But Cæsar's hour was as yet far distant. For the moment other men loomed large in the public eye. Pompey in Spain was slowly, but steadily, gaining ground upon Sertorius. Lucullus, elated by his success at Cyzicus, had hastily collected a fleet from the allies and pursued the Pontic squadron into the Ægean, where he attacked and destroyed its several detachments in detail and put relentlessly to death all the Italian deserters whom he captured, including their commander, Marcus Marius. His subordinates were engaged meanwhile in besieging the refractory cities of Bithynia and amassing great wealth in slaves and loot.* Thus by about the middle of the year 73 Lucullus had succeeded in reducing the whole of Bithynia with the exception of Heraclea, and had forced Mithridates to return by sea into his own kingdom

* Reinach, M. E., 332 f.

with the remains of the army with which he had invaded Bithynia in the previous year. It was at this moment of the campaign, some time during the summer, that Lucullus summoned a council of war at Nicomedia.* 73 B.C.

Council of war at Nicomedia.

Almost all his generals were in favour of allowing the troops to rest till the following spring; but the Commander-in-Chief did not endorse the advice of his subordinates. Whilst they regarded the situation from a strictly military standpoint Lucullus was passing through a decisive crisis in his career—a crisis that was to be of far-reaching significance, not only for his own personal character, but for the whole moral and political development of the age, of which he may be regarded as a typical representative. It was, indeed, more than a mere matter of strategy which he had summoned his generals to decide. At once impatient and far-sighted, he had made up his mind for a course which would at last resolve the contradictions from which Roman policy had so long been suffering.

Change in the character of Lucullus.

Lucullus, who had now nearly turned fifty, had up to this moment been an almost perfect specimen of that old Roman aristocracy which might, by the exercise of its traditional qualities, have made the Constitution of Sulla a genuine and durable settlement. Austere and primitive in his habits, he was a sworn foe to all ostentation and luxury and, with the sole exception of Greek culture, to every kind of influence from abroad; he gloried in his own poverty and had a true noble's disdain for popularity and all vulgar and petty ambitions. Unfortunately an aristocrat of this nature was a sort of archæological rarity at Rome, one of the last representatives of a race of men that had long since vanished from the world. While he continued thus to profess the old inherited Roman virtues, Lucullus had watched the temptations of the new age growing up all round him. He had seen friends of his own, who had unscrupulously enriched themselves in the proscriptions, honoured with more consideration than a poor man like himself. He had watched Pompey, who had risked so little in the Civil War, rise fast and high by the mere power of popularity. A man of his activity, intelligence and ambition must long since have asked himself whether, if he went on playing this obscure and old-fashioned part, he would not end by sacrificing his influence to men who shared his ambitions without partaking of his scruples. He had reluctantly acknowledged that the

* Plut., Luc., 14; Reinach, M. E., 336.

73 B.C. timid and hesitating policy of his party was justly exciting the reproaches of Italy, and that the government of Sulla was certain to be overturned if it did not show itself capable of any service to Rome. The intrigues to which he had descended in order to obtain his command had been the first visible sign of a change in his character that had so far passed unnoticed by his contemporaries, and of which even Lucullus himself was perhaps unconscious. His success as a general precipitated the crisis. His victories at Cyzicus and in the Ægean had completed his conversion to the political methods of Pompey, whose fortune had been made by his cool disregard of the requirements of the constitution. He decided not to await the orders of the Senate, but to set out immediately and on his own initiative upon the invasion of Pontus.

The policy of personal initiative.

He knew the home government too well to doubt that, if he had stayed to wait for instructions, he would eventually, after a wearisome delay, have received orders to remain inactive or to return to Italy. If, on the other hand, he set forth on a distant expedition, during the course of which it would have been highly imprudent to recall him, he would easily secure a prolongation of his powers. Moreover, if the chiefs of the popular party threatened to oppose him, he was now in a position to corrupt them with the treasures of the Orient.* The avenging of the Treaty of Dardanus and the chastisement of Mithridates were surely well worth this concession to the perverted political morality of the age. At the council of war at Nicomedia he therefore declared his determination, in face of the opposition of almost all his generals, to attempt the immediate invasion of the kingdom of Mithridates. While Cotta undertook the siege of Heraclea, and Triarius remained with seventy ships in the Hellespont to intercept the Pontic vessels on their way from Spain and Crete, the Commander-in-Chief was to march with all his army upon the two ports of Amisus and Themiscyra, to secure a base of supplies for a long campaign in the mountainous districts of Pontus. Mithridates had meanwhile retired into the recesses of his kingdom, into the triangle formed by Cabira, Amasia and Eupatoria, to prepare for a fresh campaign and await the arrival of the reinforcements he had requested from his son-in-law Tigranes, King of Armenia, his son Macares, Viceroy of the Crimea, and from the Scythians.†

* Sall., Hist. 4, f. 71 (Maurenbrecher).
† App., Mithr., 78.

Lucullus wasted little time over his preparations. Within a few weeks he had led his army across Bithynia and Galatia into the defenceless kingdom of Pontus and abandoned a rich, populous and peaceful country to his Italian soldiers, to rob cattle and stores, precious metals and curios, and make enormous and indiscriminate captures of slaves, men and women, rich and poor, peasants and burghers. All who could produce a sufficient sum to buy their freedom were set at liberty: the rest were sold to the merchants who followed the army. The price a slave in the Roman camp soon sank to 4 drachmæ.* Yet the troops were still unsatisfied. They complained that their impetuous general allowed them no time to carry off their loot at leisure, that he often even accepted the surrender of towns and villages on the condition that private property should be respected.† Their murmurings passed unheeded by Lucullus, always the strictest of disciplinarians. He marched his legions rapidly through the country up to the walls of Amisus and Themiscyra, where an obstinate resistance obliged the Roman army to spend the winter of 73–72 in the trenches. The foe who had so often threatened the Romans in offensive campaigns was at last brought to bay. But the campaign involved far more than the ordinary military operations, even of a war of the first magnitude. By his invasion of Pontus, Lucullus was not only precipitating the decision of a long and serious conflict; he was making a revolution in the international relations of his country. He was introducing a new conception into Roman policy—the idea of aggressive Imperialism. The invasion of Pontus was the first symptom of that policy of the personal initiative of provincial generals which was destined, in the course of a single decade, to replace the feeble and inconsistent control of the Senate and become the strongest force in Roman government. By being the first to make trial at his own risk of the policy to which Pompey and Cæsar were later to owe their glory, Lucullus revealed to Italy the new prospect which lay before her. He showed her how far stronger she was than the great neighbouring States which had always seemed so formidable, and stirred all her new passions in the temptation to despoil them.

73 B.C.

The great imperialist slave-raid into Pontus.

[less than 4 francs.]

In the spring of 72 operations were vigorously resumed against Mithridates and his allies in Pontus, Thrace, and Spain.

* App., Mithr., 78; Plut., Luc., 14.
† Plut., Luc., 14.

72 B.C. Lucullus, hearing that the new army of Mithridates was nearly ready and not wishing to be attacked under the walls of Amisus and Themiscyra, boldly marched out to meet it with part of his army, while the remainder continued the siege under the command of Lucius Licinius Murena. Difficulties of commissariat made the expedition both trying and dangerous, but Lucullus was assisted by the treachery of several of the Pontic generals.* He was thus able to inflict a decisive defeat on Mithridates, who had lost the best of his troops in the invasion of Asia and Bithynia in the preceding year, and had received none of the reinforcements which he had demanded. Lucullus seized the camp and the treasures of Mithridates. The king himself once more escaped him; in the disorder of the retreat he succeeded in slipping away, after leaving orders that all the women in his harem should be put to death.†

Defeat and flight of Mithridates.

Operations in Thrace. Meanwhile Marcus, brother of Lucullus, who had been sent as pro-Consul into Macedonia and was engaged on the conquest of Thrace, had crossed the Balkans and even reached the Danube.‡ He cut off the hands of whole tribes to strike terror into their neighbours,§ and not only pillaged the settlements of the Barbarians, but even the renowned Greek cities on the coast, which maintained friendly relations with Mithridates.¶

End of the war against Sertorius. At the other end of the world, in Spain, Pompey was at length able to bring his campaign to a close, thanks chiefly to the treachery of Perpenna, who had brought the strange career of Sertorius to an end by assassination. He was now beginning a war of plunder and extermination against the towns which had sided with Sertorius or welcomed his partisans.**

Progress of the slave rising in Italy. In Italy on the other hand, Spartacus after defeating the two Consuls of the year, was engaged in a triumphal progress from one end of the Peninsula to the other, followed by a crowd of traders, who shamelessly provided the slave-leader with all the materials that he needed for the manufacture of arms.†† The upper classes and the well-to-do bourgeoisie were in the wildest dismay. They thought of the vines and olives so recently planted, of the farms with their well-stocked

* Reinach, M. E., 335-6. † *Id.*, 337–342.

‡ The exaggerations of Florus, iii., 4, 6, with regard to these expeditions should be compared with the soberer accounts in Eutropius, vi., 10; Appian, iii., 30; Orosius, xi., 3, 4; Servius on Verg. Æn., vii. 605.

§ Florus, iii., 4, 7.

¶ Drümann, G. R., iv. 178; Eutrop., vi., 10.

** Drümann, G. R., iv. 376. †† App., B. C., i. 117.

wine-cellars so welcome to the insurgents, and the mutinous temper of their slaves, so recently imported into Italy and not yet accustomed to a life of dependence. But a Senate of robbers and extortioners could do little to help them. Distant and defenceless provinces it had strength enough to pillage; but it was powerless to repel the enemy at its gates. In the nervous and impressionable state of national feeling, courage and cowardice, like everything else, had become contagious. The soldiers sent to fight against Spartacus, like the officers who commanded and the politicians who enrolled them, were now completely demoralised. At the elections in 71 there were actually not sufficient candidates for the vacancies, so terrible was the prospect of having to command an army against the invincible slave-leader.* 71 B.C.

Crassus

The Senate realised that this scandal would fill the measure of popular indignation to the brim, that it was imperative at all costs to find some capable and energetic commander to put in command of the war. It found him in the person of one of the Prætors for that year. Marcus Licinius Crassus was the descendant of a noble family which we have already seen distinguishing itself during the Sullan reaction. A spoilt child of fortune, he had received from her every possible gift—illustrious birth, a rich patrimony, quick and easy opportunities for prominence, and an excellent education. He was alert, cultivated and inquisitive; and had shown gifts both of patience and initiative. He had already won a considerable military reputation by bringing help at a critical moment, during the battle of the Colline Gate, one of the most important of Sulla's victories, which was at one moment nearly turned into a defeat. Moreover, although he was born rich, he had increased his fortune by buying the goods of the proscribed, and his wealth, together with the part he had played in the repressive measures of Sulla, made him an important personage in Roman society. He had since been elected without difficulty and in the regular order to all the offices up to the Prætorship, had devoted himself successfully to business and become one of the most powerful capitalists in Rome. Nor was he averse to the new movement in education. Distinguished teachers from Greece and Rome found a ready welcome in his house, and he himself had studied philosophy and cultivated a natural gift for literature and eloquence. Crassus was rich and intelligent; he enjoyed an assured position and a large measure

* App., B. C., i. 118; Oros. v. 24, 5.

71 B.C. of power. Yet where others would have been content he remained restless and dissatisfied. He had been led by the favours of fortune to believe that there was nobody to whom he owed the first place either in office, or power, or public esteem, and he was tormented by jealousy of the reputation of Pompey, who was almost his own age and had been his fellow in arms in the war against the revolution. Unfortunately Crassus was by nature rather a careful and hard-headed man of business, than a prodigal and high-spirited politician capable of dominating and inspiring a city crowd. In some respects he was not unlike many of the great Jewish bankers of the generation that is now passing away. He was a man of moderate needs, of unblemished private character,* greatly attached to his family life and accustomed, in all departments of life and in every enterprise to which he put his hand, to exercise the minutest and most painstaking supervision. He made it his business to take advantage with infinite prudence and perseverance of every favourable opportunity, whether great or small; he advanced money to a large and influential circle of dependents; he defended every case that was offered him, even pleading for men so vile and abject that Cæsar refused to take up their cause; he was lavish in paying respects and compliments to persons of all kinds. Yet, in spite of all, he was far less admired and popular than Pompey. Pompey seemed to receive all the honour and homage that came to him with a sort of indolent pride. He never condescended, or at least he never appeared to condescend, to ask for favours, and yet he had already succeeded in obtaining a triumph and a pro-consular command without even occupying a magistracy. Crassus, on the other hand, was still a mere Prætor. He had no qualities that caught the imagination of the people. His minute attention to business and his aptitude for figures, hindered rather than helped his political advance. There was nobody whom he hated to the death, but there was nobody that he would follow to the death. He was not cruel for the pleasure of being cruel; yet he was utterly without the scruples either of native honesty, or of the caste to which he belonged. A *grand seigneur* by deliberate policy rather than by native instinct, he alternated displays of the most lavish munificence with small exhibitions of pettiness; he was inexorable, for instance, in demanding the restitution of sums lent originally out of complaisance,

* Velleius, ii., 46; Drümann, G. R., iv., 111.

if, when the time came, he thought he had no more need of his debtor. Thus all his elaborate and painstaking generosity left him no more popular than before.* 71 B.C.

His campaign against Spartacus.

The widespread influence and the military reputation of Crassus marked him out as a natural commander in the war against Spartacus. Excited by the fame that Pompey had won by his Spanish victories, and conscious that still greater distinction awaited the conqueror of the slaves, Crassus set himself to his task with characteristic energy. He broke down the infectious cowardice of his soldiers by reviving a penal measure which had been obsolete for many years, punishing the first cohorts who fled before the enemy with decimation.† But although he succeeded in inflicting several defeats upon the slaves he was unable either to crush them completely or to capture their chief. For a moment Crassus himself almost lost his self-confidence.‡ The well-to-do classes throughout Italy were losing all patience and at length the Senate took the step of re-calling Pompey from Spain to entrust him with the task of bringing Spartacus to bay.§

End of the slave rising

Crassus was not the man to surrender the fame which had seemed almost within his grasp, and was goaded to redouble all his previous exertions. Spartacus was a military genius and had worked miracles: but his heterogeneous army could not hold out indefinitely. Discord and desertion came to Crassus' aid, and he was finally able to win a victory, in the course of which Spartacus was killed.‖ When Pompey returned from Spain he found no more of the enemy than a small band of refugees whom he met in the Alps.¶ Six thousand slaves who were taken prisoners were crucified along the Appian Way,** as a warning example to their companions in captivity. The aristocracy then as always, felt no pity for rebels, and the middle class, which was beginning to have slaves of its own, and which on any other occasion would have favoured humane treatment, was just now disposed to be equally severe.

Lucullus and his army.

Meanwhile Lucullus, who had spent the winter of 72–71 at

* Plut., Crass., 6-7.

† App., B. C., i. 118; Plut., Crass., 10; Drümann, G. R., iv. 79.

‡ Plut., Crass., 11.

§ This is, I believe, the right explanation of App., B. C., i. 119. It was probably the Senate, and not the people, that recalled Pompey, but it was public opinion that forced the Senate to do so.

‖ Plut., Crass., 11.; App., B. C., i. 120.

¶ Plut., Pomp., 21; Crass., 11.

** App., B. C., i. 120; Oros., v. 24, 7.

71 B.C. Cabira in the palace of the fugitive king,* was training his small army for the final conquest of Pontus, treating it rather as an inanimate instrument than as a body of living and feeling men. In a nature so violent and passionate as his, the change which had begun after the victories in 74 and 73, had run its course very rapidly. It would have been difficult to recognise the proud and penurious young aristocrat, once the chosen lieutenant of Sulla, in the greedy, ambitious, and intriguing commander who had secured for himself the government of Asia, brought the whole of the East within his power, and kept the chiefs of the popular party at his beck and call in the capital by sending home after every victory in the field, or surrender of a city, long trains of mules bearing gifts of gold and silver and works of art. Contact with the wealth and luxury of the Eastern world had awakened all the latent cupidity of a nature which had resisted even the facile temptations of the proscriptions. But with a strange but very human inconsistency he still remained, as a general, the stern unbending aristocrat of the old days, barely admitting that his legions had any other rights but to obey. Lucullus was not exactly a cruel man, but, like all haughty and passionate natures, he was little tolerant of opposition and sank into a condition of extreme egoism, almost of monomania, whenever his mind was filled with one idea or one aim. His absolute power as a general, the intoxication of his successes, the vastness of the schemes which he was maturing, the innumerable small details of his office, together with the temptations of ambition and avarice, which were all the more insidious because so recently awakened, had swollen his natural arrogance and brutality to unmeasured dimensions. The soldiers complained that he no longer came among them like a comrade, passing from tent to tent with a kindly word of praise or encouragement, but passed by impatiently on horseback with an escort, and only when military reasons demanded it: that he had become taciturn and preoccupied, never recognising or addressing them except to point out or to punish shortcomings, or to demand the fulfilment of one difficult and perilous duty after another: and that, if he did occasionally allow them some share in the loot, he did so with a miserly reluctance, and as though he were afraid of spoiling them by indulgence. The officers,

* Phlegon, fr. 12. By making the war begin in 74, the emendation proposed by Reinach, M. E., 336, n. 2, becomes unnecessary. See Bernhardt, C. M. K., 21, n. 5.

who were members of the best families in Rome, were indignant at his continual reprimands for slackness and incapacity: they chafed at his complete indifference to name or rank, at his burdening them with order after order and service after service as though they had constitutions of iron like himself and were incapable of feeling fatigue; and they declared that, work as hard as they liked, they could never succeed in winning his approbation.* And yet Lucullus was attached to his men, and had a sincere respect for many of his officers; but he was too absorbed and harassed by his own multifarious projects to reflect on the immense value which would have been attached to an occasional word of commendation or kindness. He had no eyes for the incongruity of a situation which permitted him to send off to his representatives in Italy vast stores of money and works of art, while he went on labouring to repress the rapacity of his soldiers, and seemed to expect them to toil only for the advancement of his own personal renown. 71 B.C.

The capture and burning of Amisus.

The soldiers had naturally expected that Lucullus would attack the mountain strongholds where all the treasures of the court were deposited,† and thus reward them for their long hardships with the treasure chests and the furniture of the Pontic king. But Lucullus, unblinded by the prospect of loot, intended first to make himself complete master of Pontus by taking the large Greek cities, Amasia, Amisus and Sinope; and he followed his usual custom, and the example of the old Roman generals, in paying no attention to the wishes of his soldiers. After securing the surrender of a few fortresses by treachery, he led his grumbling legions against these last relics of the civilising power of Greece upon the Black Sea. Ever since Rome's maladministration of the Pergamene bequest, her power had become hated and feared by all the Greeks in Asia; and the cities had thus prepared to make a long and obstinate resistance. By the end of 71 only Amisus had as yet surrendered.‡ It had been a terrible night for Lucullus when his soldiers, after seizing the town in a surprise assault, had rushed through the streets by torch-light, rioting, sacking and butchering, and setting many of the houses on fire. Lucullus was a typical Roman general, but he had been brought up under the influences of Greek culture, and he reverenced the memory of Hellenism. When he saw Amisus, the Athens of Pontus,

* Dion, fr. 330, 16 (Gros.); Plut., Luc., 33.
† Reinach, M. E., 260. ‡ *Id.* 349.

71 B.C. a prey to the flames, he threw himself like a madman among his troops, seeking to bring them back to reason and discipline, and beseeching their help to save the city from extinction. But he was asking too much. The patience of the long-suffering legionary had broken down. Now that he was at last finding compensation for long months of hardship, and finding it after his own brutal and terrible fashion, it was in vain for his general to interfere with the old catch-words of moderation. Lucullus only narrowly escaped being torn to pieces; and he had reluctantly to allow his unruly condottieri to do their will on the daughter city of Athens. They were symbolic of the age in which they lived, an age in which the highest powers of the human spirit were becoming refined in their desires, and in the enjoyment of the noblest things the world has to offer, while at the same moment all the bestial instincts were let loose in the struggle of man against man for the acquirement of wealth and power. The old military severity personified by Lucullus was forced to give way before a mob of mutinous soldiers with a wild beast appetite for plunder. Their general could do no more than set at liberty all who survived from the carnage, and rebuild the fallen city.*

* Plut., Luc., 19; App., Mith., 83; Memnon, 45.

CHAPTER IX

THE NEW POPULAR PARTY

Pompey and Crassus stand for the Consulship—Reconciliation of Pompey and Crassus—Pompey's democratic measures—The Sicilians accuse Verres—Cicero—The Conservative party and the defence of Verres—New dissensions between Pompey and Crassus—The elections for 69 and the judicial law of Cotta—Intrigues of Verres—The trial of Verres and first great success of Cicero—Lucullus takes Sinope, Amasia and Heraclea.

Position of Pompey.

WHILE Lucullus was fighting in Asia, the Conservative party continued to lose ground in Italy. The successes of its general in the East caused no improvement in its own position at home, for every one realised that they were due solely to the personal initiative of Lucullus and not to the policy of the Senate. Even aristocrats began to turn towards ideas of democratic reform; and one of the most active and prominent young men of the party was even now preparing to secede from its ranks. In the second half of the year 71, when he returned to Rome from the Spanish War, Pompey was no longer what he had been at his departure, a young *protégé* of Sulla, for whom every one predicted a brilliant career. By his victory over Sertorius, the importance of which had been greatly exaggerated so as to win him widespread popularity in Italy, he had become, at the age of thirty-six, one of the great personages of the Republic, a man who, although he had never held any public office, and was not even a Senator, could take equal rank beside the most influential and respected of his contemporaries. No member of the younger generation, not even Crassus, had had greater chances offered him than Pompey. But the rapidity of his rise, as he could not help being aware, had excited much jealousy among the ruling caste. On his return from Spain he felt his anomalous situation was becoming precarious; and he resolved to secure himself once and for all by standing in the ordinary course as a candidate for public office. Unfortunately, it is sometimes just as difficult to find

71 B.C. the way out of a privileged position as to find the way in. After commanding armies as a pro-Consul and receiving the title of Imperator, Pompey could not very well begin his career over again, as the laws demanded, with the Quæstorship and the Ædileship. He decided therefore, to concentrate his efforts on the highest office of all, and to appear as a candidate for the Consulship in the year 70, thus returning into the ordinary groove through an irregularity greater than all that had preceded: for he had neither the age nor any of the other qualifications requisite for becoming Consul.

He veers towards the Democrats.

The moment seemed propitious; but there were the old difficulties in his way, and the means which had hitherto proved successful in overcoming them would no longer suffice. It was certain that the Conservatives, many of whom were jealous of his promotion and had hampered his Spanish campaign by the refusal of supplies, would use every effort to oppose his candidature. On the other hand, the relative positions of Pompey and his party had altered considerably during the years of his absence in Spain. While the Conservatives had been declining in popular estimation, Pompey had been steadily gaining ground, till he was now, in company with Crassus, the man of the hour, and the most popular general in the State. Like most of his generation, he held but lightly by principle; his successes had filled him with self-confidence, and roused his indignation against a party from whom he had received nothing and expected nothing. It was a tempting prospect to woo himself into favour with the Democrats, and come back to power at the head of his new party to exact retribution from the treacherous allies who had played him false during the war. He began by making advances to the tribunes of the people promising, if he obtained the Consulship by their support, to re-establish the old prerogatives of the Tribunician power. These proposals were received with enthusiasm by the popular party, who were lacking in influential leaders. It was felt that a man so distinguished by his ancestry and achievements, his social position and assured popularity, was well worth the sacrifice of a few terrible memories.* Within a few days, the friend of Sulla, the man who had murdered Junius Brutus and quenched in bloodshed the revolt of Lepidus, had become the admired leader of the popular party and its candidate for the Consulship.

Yet it is likely enough that for all this Pompey's candidature

* Drümann, G. R., iv. 379.

would not have succeeded if chance had not come once more to his assistance. Crassus, whose old chagrin had been re-awakened by the intervention of Pompey in his campaign against the slaves,* was himself casting an eye on the chief magistracy when he learnt of his rival's intention. Now the candidature of Crassus, who was still in command of an army, although less irregular than that of Pompey, was also unconstitutional. The two generals decided to forget, if not to forgive, their differences and to join forces for mutual advantage. Crassus needed the popularity of Pompey to recommend him to the suffrages of the people.† Pompey needed the mediation of Crassus to overcome the opposition of Crassus' debtors in the Senate. Their calculations proved correct. Under the pretext of waiting for a triumph both generals kept their troops under arms outside Rome, and the Senate was soon intimidated into admitting the legality of both candidatures. Crassus and Pompey were thereupon elected without opposition to the Consulship for the year 70, and Pompey begged his friend Marcus Terentius Varro to write him a memorandum on the duties of a Consul, of which, as he said, he was completely ignorant.‡

71 B.C.

Crassus and Pompey elected Consuls.

Pompey's promises to the democrats and his popularity with the middle class gave hopes of a memorable Consulship. But during the months that elapsed between the election and the end of the year (the Consuls entered upon their duties on January 1), the prospect was clouded by the renewal of hostility between the two allies. Crassus declined to follow Pompey in his conversion to democracy or to lend him assistance in his schemes of reform. No doubt he was afraid that the glory of any such achievements would fall to the colleague of whom he was so jealous, and to whose initiative they would indeed be due. He was, moreover, too Conservative by birth, inclination and interest not to look with disquietude on the results of a democratic triumph. In carrying through a programme of this nature the very foundations of Sulla's work, its moral authority no less than its legal guarantees, seemed likely to be affected; and Crassus, of course, had not only been one of the most useful of Sulla's agents; he had also bought up, for enormous sums, the goods of the proscribed. The Consuls were thus unable to come to any agreement. Neither of them dismissed their legions. Even after entering

Dissensions between Crassus and Pompey.

* Plut., Pomp., 21; Crass., 11. † Plut., Pomp., 22; Crass., 12.
‡ Aul., Gell., xiv. 7.

71 B.C. Rome and celebrating an ovation, Crassus declared that he would keep his army under orders so long as Pompey did the same. Pompey on his side only increased the emphasis of his democratic professions. When, between the end of November and the beginning of December, the Tribune of the people, Marcus Lollius Palicanus, conducted a huge crowd outside the walls to his camp to hear a statement of his Consular programme,* he made them an exceedingly violent speech. Too long, he said, had they watched votes being sold by auction to the highest bidder in the tribunals; too long had they groaned under the intolerable iniquities of official plunderers in the provinces. He declared openly that he would set his hand to the redress of these abuses, and gave them also to understand that he would re-establish in their entirety the prerogatives of the Tribunes. His oration was immensely successful. Yet Crassus was still undecided: and the unhappy disagreement between the Consuls might make havoc of all Pompey's excellent designs.

Public reconciliation between Crassus and Pompey.

Their friends attempted to interpose. Great popular demonstrations were organised to coax the two into a reconciliation. At last, when, on January 1, Pompey entered upon his office, Crassus was so far overcome by public opinion as to declare himself ready to support the policy of his colleague. The reconciliation took place in public, apparently in the first days of their Consulship, and their troops were forthwith dismissed.† Soon afterwards, assisted by the huge distributions of corn made by Crassus and the sumptuous festivals arranged by Pompey, the latter opened his attack upon the Constitution of Sulla, demanding that the Tribunes should be given back the powers taken from them by Sulla, particularly the power of proposing laws without authorisation from the Senate. As this last proposal required to be approved by the Senate, a huge agitation was set on foot to intimidate the majority. Cæsar, always on the look-out for opportunities of self-advertisement, dashed into the fray and made intemperate speeches at public meetings,‡ while Crassus made quiet

* Cic., in Verr., A. i., 15; Asc., p. 148 (Orelli).

† It is to Appian (B. C., i. 121), and not to Plutarch (Pomp., 23, Crass., 12), that we must look, despite the briefness of his account, for the truth about the quarrel and reconciliation. Suet., Cæsar, 19, declares, what is confirmed by the whole story of the events from 70 to 60, that Crassus and Pompey were on bad terms at the end of their Consulship.

‡ See Suet., Cæs., 5.

but effective use of his subterranean channels of influence in the Senate. 70 B.C.

Encouraged by Pompey's proposals and by the manifest weakness of the Conservatives, the animosities which had long been smouldering against the Sullan clique now broke out on all sides. Public feeling was soon excited to fever heat. Whilst their leaders were satisfied with attacking the system, the people cried out for a victim in flesh and blood. Fortune delivered one into their hands in the person of Caius Verres, an ex-officer in the revolutionary army, who, like Cethegus, had known exactly when to leap from the sinking ship; passing thence into the service of the Conservative party, he had been elected Prætor for the year 74, and then sent as pro-Prætor to Sicily where, thanks to the influence of his friends at Rome, he had succeeded in remaining three years instead of one. Whether his ravages and exactions in the island were really so shameless as his accusers declared, or whether the story of his crimes is not, in part at any rate, a legend skilfully set in circulation by the enemies of his party, must remain one of the secrets of history. It is difficult to judge a man's conduct fairly when we only possess the articles of his prosecution. It is certain, at any rate, that people in Rome had been saying for a long time past that Verres was guilty of countless offences, not only against Sicilians, but even against Roman citizens; and his scandalous misrule was thought to be ruining the greatest and most indispensable of the Roman granaries.* So loud was the outcry that his successor, a Conservative named Lucius Metellus, had gone to Sicily with the sincere intention of repairing his maladministration,† and the Sicilian cities had been so far encouraged as to send a deputation to accuse him at Rome. **Verres and the Sicilians.**

At a quieter moment this prosecution would have had no better chance of succeeding than the many others attempted by provincials during the Sullan *régime*. It was almost impossible that they should find a sympathetic hearing. There were too many private interests always enlisted against truth and justice; and a condemnation infringed the self-constituted right of the governing class to pillage the provinces at their will. The unhappy complainants invariably failed to find an influential patron among the Conservatives, and were generally forced back upon the feeble resources of the demo- **The Democrats take up the case.**

* See the excellent study by Ciccotti; *Il processo di Verre*, Milan, 1895, p. 79 ff.

† Cic. in Verr., A. ii., xxv., 62 ff.

70 B.C. crats for some defender devoid of influence or reputation, thus entering upon their struggle against the formidable conspiracy of class interests armed only with the discredited weapon of the justice of their cause. But for once the Sicilian deputies had arrived at Rome in the nick of time. The agitation for reform was just being inaugurated, and public opinion at once declared vehemently in their favour. Pompey and the chiefs of the democratic party snatched at the opportunity. Perceiving that a great case against extortion would be an excellent means of fomenting their agitation, they took the affair directly under their patronage and resolved not to let it drop. The Sicilians did not even now find an influential advocate to defend them; but they chose better than they knew when they secured Marcus Tullius Cicero, a young man of thirty-six, of great ability, and unusual eloquence, who was free from all connections with the Conservative party, and yet ambitious of achieving a great position in the State.

Cicero's career and ambitions.

Cicero was born at Arpinum of an equestrian family of small means. He belonged to what we should call the provincial bourgeoisie, and was being brought up in the old-time simplicity of an Italian country town. He had received a very careful literary education, and had gone on to Greece to attend courses of philosophy and eloquence. With his time fully occupied in study he had spent his youth, like the Romans of the older generation, undistracted by the amusements and temptations on which so many of the young men of his day wasted time and money. Yet it was not political ambition or the hope of playing a leading part in the Republic which had given him strength to serve so thoroughly in the hard apprenticeship of eloquence. When, on the death of his father he had inherited his modest fortune, an estate at Arpinum and a house at Rome, and had come to establish himself in the metropolis, he found Sulla all-powerful and the younger members of the equestrian families excluded from politics. Cicero, who was an upright man, and abhorred the excesses of the cabal, soon convinced himself that the gates of power would always remain closed to a young Italian who refused to take service under Sulla or his accomplices. Endowed with all the qualities that go to make up the artistic temperament, with imagination, sensibility and a feeling for beauty, but ambitious at the same time for recognition and renown, he had perhaps not found it difficult to renounce all dreams of political greatness for the more congenial ideal of becoming a prince

of the Forum, a worthy rival of Hortensius and the great masters of Roman law and oratory. 70 B.C.

He had made a striking *début*. Spurred on by the ambition of youth, and by a genuine detestation of violence, he had accepted the defence of several unhappy men, Roscius amongst others, persecuted, under different pretexts, by the creatures of the dictator. His generous hardihood, aided by truly exceptional powers of eloquence, had soon brought his name into celebrity and enabled him, about the year 77, to contract a successful marriage with Terentia, a lady belonging to a rich and distinguished family, who brought him in a dowry of 120,000 drachmæ and owned several houses at Rome and an estate near Tusculum. This marriage had made Cicero, who lived in a simple style, extremely comfortable, if not exactly rich. He continued to plead in the law-courts, keeping himself honourably independent of the Conservative party and acting up to the ideal of the older lawyers, who refused to admit the giving of legal assistance to be a regular profession, preferring to regard it as a social duty performed gratuitously by the wealthy. While Hortensius and other celebrated advocates of the Conservative party gladly undertook the defence of provincial governors for a reasonable share in the spoils, Cicero was pre-eminent among his contemporaries for his strict observance of the *lex Cincia*, which debarred advocates from the acceptance of a honorarium from their clients. His impeccable honesty, the simplicity of his life, and his courageous independence of the Conservative clique, together with his great intellectual and oratorical gifts, had attracted to him general esteem and sympathy, not only among active democratic partisans, but among all ranks of society. His political career had borne witness to his popularity. Although he had little money to spend on elections and cherished few political ambitions, he had already been elected to the Quæstorship without even the expense of a contest.*

Cicero as lawyer.

[£4800.] [Frascati.]

Cicero accepted with enthusiasm the defence of the Sicilians. It appears that he succeeded already in January in inducing the Prætor, Manius Acilius Glabrio, to refuse to entertain an accusation directed against Verres by Quintus Cæcilius, his old Quæstor; possibly with the connivance of Verres himself. Then, having secured a delay of one hundred and ten days for the collection of evidence, he left for Sicily.

Cicero goes to Sicily for evidence.

* See the admirable work by Boissier: *Cicéron et ses amis*, 1902, p. 9, 83 ff.

70 B.C. Meanwhile the Conservatives had been unable to repel the attacks of Pompey. When the Bill dealing with the powers of the Tribunes was discussed in the Senate, only a small number of members ventured to oppose it, amongst them Marcus Lepidus, Marcus Lucullus and Catulus. Even Catulus, however, went so far as to acknowledge that Pompey's measure might seem to be justified by the corruption of the Senatorial tribunals.* The large majority of Senators approved of the bill.†

The Tribunician Bill passes the Senate.

The aristocracy and the cabal.

Here surely we have decisive proof that, after ten years of scandal and conflict, opposition to the aristocratic *régime* was widespread in all classes and even extended to the nobility. Curiously enough, it seems to have been most felt amongst the two extreme wings of the aristocracy, comprising its best and its worst elements: amongst the able and vigorous young men who were its most stalwart and promising upholders, and among the ambitious and unprincipled products of the changed conditions of the time.

The condition of the aristocracy.

The old land-holding aristocracy had by now become transformed into a society of financiers and plutocrats. Of the historic nobility of Rome but a small circle of families remained, almost all of them in straitened circumstances.‡ The upper class was no longer composed solely of the nobility, but included many wealthy knights and some men of humbler origin but distinguished gifts like Cicero; it found room, in fact, for all the boldest and most skilful competitors in the universal struggle for wealth, education and power. There were still, it is true, a certain number of old families which preserved the characteristic ideas which all aristocracies seem to have the power of crystallising long after their political decay, ideas which had at Rome been re-awakened and intensified by the reaction of Sulla. There were still men who felt the old hostility against the upstart classes, the old contempt for the present generation as vulgar and corrupt, the old prejudice for the principle of authority, and a horror of all political change whether wanton and criminal or merely indispensable for the progress of society. Such men could not conceive how the

* Cic., in Verr., i. 15. Ascon., in Cic., Pro Corn., p. 79 (Orelli).

† Drümann, G. R., iv. 388.

‡ As examples of noble families reduced to ruin at this time may be cited the family of M. Antonius, Prætor in 75 (Drümann, G. R., ii. 46); of Appius Claudius Pulcher, Consul in 79, and father of the notorious Clodius, of the Consul of 54, and of Clodia (Drümann, G. R., ii. 184 ff.); of Cneius Piso (Sallust, Cat., 18); of Publinius Lentulus Sura (*id.* 17). See above for Cæsar's family. Plutarch (Cic., 10), speaks of the poverty of the old Roman nobility at this time.

son of a peasant at Velletri or Arpinum, who happened, through fortunate speculations, to have become a millionaire, could venture to rival them in the display of riches and share in the distribution of political offices. They could not bear to see a crowd of obscure lawyers and Tribunes, who had fought their way up from the lower ranks of society, hurling accusations against the patricians who had once been the demi-gods of the people. They hated to see the cobblers and artisans, the shopkeepers and freedmen of Rome hissing their superiors when they appeared in the Forum, and refusing them their votes when they were canvassed at elections: and they turned away more in sorrow than in indignation from an age which seemed to have lost all respect for birth or breeding or inherited wealth or intelligence. 70 B.C.

The new policy of the aristocracy.

Yet there were nobles who perceived that the rising power of the middle class and the knights could no longer be treated in the spirit of two centuries ago; that the times were changed, and new aspirations must perforce be satisfied; and who were prepared, whether through philosophic conviction or personal ambition, to adapt their opinions to a new society, in which, whatever the pessimists might say, intelligence and wealth were bound to take precedence over the claims of manners and ancestry. Such men realised that the surest way of preserving the social power of the nobility was through a conscious adaptation to the new democratic *régime*. Nor need they despair of fully holding their own. The centralisation of the political offices at Rome, the claims of business, the absence of a political tradition or of easy means of advancement, the terrible memories of the Civil Wars and the reaction, all tended to divert from the political arena almost the whole of the equestrian order and the new middle class. Had it not been for the surviving aristocratic families, there would actually not have been a sufficiency of magistrates of all sorts to provide for the government of the Empire. If only, therefore, the aristocracy consented to abandon absurd and superannuated pretensions, it could still continue to divide among its members almost all the offices of the State.

Revival of the Censorship.

After this initial success with the Tribunician Bill in the Senate, Sulla's work was attacked on all sides. Plautius, one of the Tribunes, who was seconded by Cæsar, secured the passing of an amnesty for the survivors of the Civil Wars, including all who had fought for Lepidus and Sertorius.* The Censorship,

* Suet., Cæs., 5.

70 B.C. which had been suspended seventeen years before, was re-established, and, in April or May, the new Censors, Lucius Gellius and Cneius Lentulus, cleared the Senate of many of the friends of Sulla, driving out amongst others Caius Antonius Hybrida, whom Cæsar had unsuccessfully attacked in 77.

Cotta's Bill puts the Conservatives on their mettle.

This was only the prelude to a more determined onslaught. Lucius Aurelius Cotta, a noble of democratic opinions, now proposed to restore to the knights their old power in the law-courts, on the ground that, as they were almost all of them rich, there would be no object in attempting to corrupt them.* But here the issue was no longer so simple; and the reform of the law-courts met with a far more strenuous opposition than any of the preceding proposals. Brought forward at a moment when the public was taking so lively an interest in the case of Verres, it caused consternation in the Conservative camp. It is easy to recall the arguments by which they stiffened their resistance. The Tribunes had now recovered their old prerogatives, and it was enough to prosecute any one of any wealth or distinction for his condemnation to be assured without prospect of appeal. It was an ominous moment to select for allowing the knights to sit in judgment over their Senatorial enemies. Henceforward every provincial Governor would be, like Verres, at the mercy of his subjects. Year by year deputations would stream in from the provinces clamouring for justice against the oppressor, and, backed by a sentimental public, the knights would be relentless in exacting it! The excellent intentions of a class or a party normally last just so long as they maintain it in power. This case was no exception to the rule. Many Conservatives had long ago admitted that it was necessary to improve the conditions of justice and to repress abuses; yet, in their apprehension lest that justice might be exercised upon themselves, they were not content with opposing Cotta's proposed legislation; they even undertook the rescue of the unfortunate Verres, whose attack and condemnation seemed likely to involve the whole party in disaster. It was decided to run Conservative candidates for all the more important offices and to employ every means for securing their success. Quintus Hortensius, the celebrated lawyer, and Quintus Metellus, were to stand for the Consulship, and Marcus Metellus, brother of Quintus and of Lucius, the Governor of Sicily, for the Prætorship. These candidates and

* Cic., in Verr., A. ii. 2, lxxi. 174; ii. 2, xcvi. 33. See Lange, R. A., iii. 193.

other leading members of the nobility, including Caius Scribonius Curio, soon came to terms with Verres. Verres engaged to use all his influence on their behalf during the election, while Hortensius promised to undertake his defence. Quintus and Marcus Metellus wrote to their brother Lucius in Sicily asking him to hush up the evidence of Verres' misdeeds. If they were elected, and the law of Cotta thrown out, they would try to postpone the case till the following year; it would then come before a tribunal of Senators presided over, most probably, by Marcus Metellus, and Verres would have a Consul for his defender.* 70 B.C.

Meanwhile, despite the intrigues of Metellus, Cicero had been diligently pursuing his enquiries, and when he returned at the date fixed, about the end of April, he brought with him a pile of documentary evidence. But his case did not at once come on for hearing. He had to wait till the end of another suit brought against the Governor of Macedonia, put up or, at the least, prolonged, to cause the postponement of his own. To Cicero himself this delay was by no means inconvenient; for it left him free to devote himself to his approaching candidature for the Ædileship. Now that the case against Verres had been put off, and Cotta's Bill blocked by Conservative opposition, the forces of both parties should have been concentrated upon the elections, which were to take place, as usual, about the middle of the year. Unfortunately, when Cicero returned from Sicily, the democratic party was distracted, within a few months of its first successes, by unhappy divisions within its own ranks. The quarrel between the two Consuls had broken out afresh. **New dissensions between Pompey and Crassus.**

The ancient historians give us little information as to the motives and details of a difference which was to be momentous in its effects. It is probable that it was brought about by the ambitions of Pompey. Pompey was a perfect specimen of the man of talent, who, though himself devoid of any real originality or creative power, is quick to pick up and to profit by new ideas brought within his reach by men of genius. If he had been sent to the East in the place of Lucullus, he would never have ventured to stake all upon the invasion of Pontus, but would have preferred to proceed with the leisurely prudence traditional among Roman generals. But now, after the amazing successes of Lucullus, his imagination suddenly awoke to all that these conquests had to teach him. He saw that the timid **Character and ambitions of Pompey.**

* Ciccotti, P. V., 155.

70 B.C. Eastern policy of the Senate was unnecessary and incongruous, that the great Asiatic monarchies, so imposing to the outside observer, were helpless and invertebrate organisms, which could easily be mastered by energetic aggression; and that the adoption of such a policy would lay open a new and wealthy field to the administrators and financiers of Italy, and provide soldiers and politicians with new sources of wealth, influence and renown. He had therefore conceived the idea of procuring an appointment in the East as pro-Consul,* in the place of Lucullus, to take his share of gleaning in the field where Lucullus had been working for the last four years. In this way he would ensure for his party the direction and exploitation of the new Eastern policy devised by Lucullus, to the importance of which the Conservatives still seemed so strangely blind.

Demoralisation of the Democrats.

Unfortunately Crassus, always jealous of his colleague, once more took delight in barring his advance. So vigorously did he defend the foreign policy of Lucullus, which was identified, of course, with the Conservative party, that the two Consuls were soon at variance on all matters of policy.† A quarrel of this nature could not but be disastrous for the popular party, which was only just recovering its strength after a long period of persecution and lacked the coherent organisation which rendered the Conservatives, despite all their mishaps, still a powerful fighting force both in supporters and money. It was, in fact, so greatly demoralised by the dissensions of its leaders that all political operations came to a standstill. Towards the middle of the year Cotta was left to defend his law by himself, and in the elections for 69 the Conservative candidates were allowed to secure the Consulship and Marcus Metellus the Prætorship. These were happy auguries of acquittal for Verres. With the connivance of his patrons, he now attempted to use Hortensius and Metellus to intimidate the Sicilian ambassadors and induce them to withdraw from their accusation, at the same time using all the money at his command to procure the defeat of Cicero's candidature for the Ædileship. Cicero's failure would have been a final blow to the Sicilians, who were already disquieted by the result of the Consular elections; and the whole trial would probably have been over after a hearing of a few days.‡

The disastrous impression caused by the elections roused Pompey and the Democratic chiefs out of their torpor, and

* Mommsen, R. G., iii. 106. † Plut., Pomp., 22.
‡ Cic., in Verr., A., i. 9.

Cicero, energetically supported by the party, was elected to the Ædileship. Thanks to hard work and to a few skilful concessions, the law of Cotta, too, was finally approved; in the form in which it became law the judges were to be chosen not from amongst the knights only, but from amongst the Senators, the knights and the richer plebeians.* The Sicilians were thus encouraged to hold firm, and the arrangements for the prosecution of Verres, the first hearing of which was fixed for August 5, were vigorously pushed forward. Soon nothing else was talked of in Rome and all over Italy but the approaching trial. Men thought of it as they might have thought of a gladiatorial spectacle, where under the eyes of a public eager for sensations, a young and rising lawyer was to fight over the body of a pro-Prætor with the prince of Roman orators, while they sat by and watched all the tricks and resources of Forum eloquence displayed with relentless ingenuity by each of the combatants. Gossip and prophecy flowed fast and full. Some knew that attempts would be made to tamper with the judges designated by lot. Others spoke of overpowering evidence collected in Sicily which would be held in reserve till the crowning moment. More sceptical observers declared that, like so many other foxes previously caught in the same trap, Verres too would escape without even leaving his tail behind him. All the amateurs of oratorical warfare were impatient to be present at the battle of eloquence between Cicero and Hortensius. Cicero, said those who pretended to experience in these matters, was a young man of great erudition and brilliant gifts, but he would sorely miss the experience of his distinguished opponent.

70 B.C.

The impending trial.

Meanwhile both sides completed their preparations for the great conflict. Cicero, whose imagination was raised by the universal excitement to a pitch of unusual lucidity, felt instinctively that this was to be a decisive moment in his career. He gave up the idea of fighting opponents of such skill and influence with the customary weapons of his profession, realising that, with the public already prepossessed in his favour, the bludgeon would serve him better than the rapier. It would be best, he saw, to abandon dialectics and dexterities for a bold and slashing onslaught, and to endeavour to take the feelings of the public by storm through some amazing and unexpected sensation. He took pains therefore to arrange his material in the manner most calculated to make an impression

Tactics of the two parties.

* Cic., in Verr., A., ii. 5, lxix. 178.

70 B.C. upon the crowd, preparing, together with each group of evidence, a brief but clear and trenchant address.* Verres and his friends, on the other hand, elated by their success at the elections, attempted to circumvent and cajole the witnesses, arranging, for instance, to have panegyrics of the accused sent up from all the towns of Sicily. They also devised ingenious tactics against the fury and impatience of the prosecution, by endeavouring to make the proceedings drag on until August 16, the date when all hearings would be suspended for a fortnight to celebrate the games promised by Pompey ever since the war against Sertorius. They would then continue the same manœuvre until the case was postponed into the following year. There was considerable prospect of their success, for there were several legal holidays during the remaining months of the year —from September 4 to 19 for the Roman Games, from October 26 to November 4 for the Games of Victory, and from November 4 to 17 for the Plebeian Games.†

The trial of Verres.

On the morning of August 4, when the hearing began, a huge crowd was collected in the Forum, round the seats set apart for the judges, the witnesses, and the parties to the action. Verres appeared upon the scene with Hortensius, attended by many of the greatest personages in Rome and full of confidence in the scheme so carefully elaborated with his advocate. Unfortunately for him, his case was not simply an ordinary suit for extortion ; it was closely bound up with the struggle of political parties, and Cicero had formed a better estimate than Hortensius of the state of general opinion. When the documents and evidence skilfully drawn up by the prosecution were laid bare before the public, when the long tale of sufferings endured by the people of Sicily was recited and exaggerated in the Forum by a succession of passionate and eloquent witnesses, the tide of indignation that had been slowly gathering for a decade in all classes of the community against Sulla, the reaction and the Conservative cabal, suddenly burst the flood gates. Some of the more pathetic incidents in the evidence even moved the public to tears ; others provoked murmurs of disgust ; others drove them to cries of inarticulate rage. At the end of each hearing the revelations made during the day were circulated broadcast through the city, and thus, with changes and accretions as they passed from mouth to mouth, they roused the entire population to sympathetic interest. The next day a still greater crowd would press

* Ciccotti, P. V., 176 ff. † *Id.*, 175 ff.

round the Forum, hoping to catch something of the tale of horrors, and crying out in wild indignation, without understanding a word, when it perceived the growing excitement of those who stood nearer to the tribunal. One day when a witness told how Verres had crucified a Roman citizen who had in vain made the appeal: *Civis Romanus Sum*, the audience was stirred to such ungovernable fury that, if the Prætor had not immediately adjourned the hearing, Verres would have been lynched in the open Forum. It was indeed no single individual who was on his trial; it was a party, a system of government, a whole epoch, come to judgment. The public conscience, so long bound down to a hateful silence, sought relief at last by pouring out all its long-stored wrath on the miserable pro-Prætor whom accident had delivered to its hatred, and made him expiate in his single person, not only his own private sins but all the crimes of Sulla and his detested accomplices. So overwhelming was the fury of the people that Verres and his friends, taken utterly by surprise, felt their case to be hopeless and lost heart. For thirteen days they attempted to stem the violence of the current: day by day they watched it rising higher. The moment came when they realised that no judges could dare to acquit the accused. On the fourteenth day the sitting was suspended. Verres, to save a part at least of his fortune, abandoned the conflict and went into voluntary exile.* He disappeared for ever from the presence and the memory of his countrymen; while Cicero, now become one of the chief men in Rome, went fast and far on the path of renown. Neither of the two men suspected, as they parted to pursue these different destinies, that the roads they took would bring them together once again, twenty-seven years later, on the brink of the same abyss. 70 B.C.

While these events were taking place in Italy, Lucullus had gone to spend the winter of the year 71 in the province of Asia, of which he had been made Governor. He found it ruined by the exactions that the Italian financiers, in their wanton impatience for quick profits, had inflicted upon the population. If Lucullus had become in many respects a changed man, he still preserved the old aversion of an hereditary aristocrat for the whole breed of financiers, and he now displayed his usual impetuosity in a courageous attempt to renew the policy of Rutilius Rufus. He proceeded to take measures to check the cupidity of the tax-farmers, without in the least reflecting, Lucullus in Asia.

* Ciccotti, P. V., 171-194.

70 B.C. in the self-confidence of temporary omnipotence, what powerful enemies his magnanimity would provoke.* Moreover, he was now revolving a still grander and more ambitious design —nothing less than the invasion and conquest of the whole monarchy of Tigranes, King of Armenia and son-in-law and protector of Mithridates. Thanks to the weakness of Roman policy during the last half century, and latterly also to the distractions of the Bithynian War and the conquest of Pontus, Tigranes had been able, during the last fifteen years, to enlarge his Empire in all directions by the methods of conquest and alliance. His power now extended as far North as the Caucasus, where his rule was acknowledged by the semi-barbarous populations of the Albanians and Iberians; while on the South, East and West he had conquered almost the whole Empire of the Seleucids, in Cilicia, Syria and Phœnicia, and robbed the Parthians of several of their provinces by the submission of the Satraps of Great Media, Media Atropatene and Gordiene.†

The kingdom of Armenia.

Capture of Sinope, Amasia, and Heraclea.

It was against this unwieldy and ill-assorted Empire that Lucullus now intended to direct his newly discovered imperialism. But before invading Armenia, he wished first to secure himself against the enemy in his rear by completing the conquest of Pontus. Sending his brother-in-law, Appius Claudius, to demand from Tigranes the surrender of Mithridates,‡ he had left in the spring of 70 to continue the siege of Sinope and Amasia. He was certain that Tigranes would refuse his demand and thus provide him with a pretext for a declaration of war. Sinope and Amasia surrendered in the autumn with a large number of prisoners, and Lucullus was for once able to put some check upon the brutality of his soldiers.§ A worse fate had befallen Heraclea in the previous spring. The stupid and ferocious Cotta had besieged it by land, while Triarius, who was less stupid but still more ferocious, besieged it by sea. When the town finally capitulated, they pillaged houses and temples without mercy, ransacking all their store of treasure; massacred or reduced to slavery the entire population and even took away the far-famed statue of Heracles, with its arrows of solid gold. They had then set fire to the town and, while the smoke mounted to the sky, the Roman

* Plut., Luc., 20.
† Reinach, M. E., 310 ff.; Strabo, xi. 14, 15 (532).
‡ Plut., Luc., 21. § Reinach, M. E., 356.

ships sailed out of port so crammed with booty that several foundered on the voyage.* 70 B.C.

Tigranes refuses Lucullus' demands.

Meanwhile a defiant answer had arrived from Tigranes. Influenced it appears, by a party among his councillors who feared a possible rival in Mithridates, the King of Armenia had been unwilling at first to receive him, and had consigned him to honorary banishment in a distant fortress; but he had no intention of yielding to the wishes of a Roman general or of descending to the position of a subject monarch. There was now a pretext for invasion. In the spring of 69 the campaign was to begin.

* Memnon, 51-2.

CHAPTER X

THE CONQUEST OF ARMENIA AND THE FINANCIAL CRISIS IN ITALY

Crisis in the popular party towards the end of the year 70—Enmity between Crassus and Pompey—Lucullus invades the kingdom of Armenia—Battle of the Tigris—Lucullus and Alexander the Great—The budget of the Roman Republic—The passion for speculation in Italy—The abuse of credit—General indebtedness—The first appearance of the new demagogues—Pompey, the financiers and the demagogues combine against Lucullus—Lucullus intends to march into Persia—First mutiny of his legions.

Crisis in the popular party.

MEANWHILE at Rome the year 70 had ended unfavourably for the popular party. Pompey had been so much disconcerted and exasperated by the intrigues of Crassus, that he had given up the idea of replacing Lucullus and declared that at the end of his Consulship he would retire into private life without accepting a province.* Crassus, delighted to have interfered with Pompey's calculations, had also preferred to stay at Rome, knowing that a provincial governorship would be far less lucrative than a continuance of his speculations. The Conservatives were somewhat reassured by Pompey's discomfiture, more particularly as nearly all the offices were in the hands of their nominees. For the rest, since the defeat of Mithridates, there was peace within the Empire. The only war on hand for the moment was that against the Cretan pirates who, after the defeat of Marcus Antonius, had in vain sent ambassadors to Rome to sue for peace.†

Lucullus invades Armenia.

Lucullus alone allowed himself no rest. In the spring of 69 he set out without authorisation from home on the hazardous adventure of the conquest of Armenia, with two legions and some bodies of Asiatic auxiliaries, mostly Galatians and Thra-

* Velleius, 2-31.
† App., Sic., vi. 1.

cians, scarcely 20,000 men in all,* and with only the vaguest information about the geography of the country. Mithridates and Tigranes, who had patched up their quarrel when they realised the intentions of Lucullus, had prepared a strong army to meet him. If in the conquest of Pontus, Lucullus had given a rather liberal interpretation to the orders of the Senate, his invasion of Armenia marks the definite inauguration, at his own risk, of a policy of personal initiative. Halting only by night and allowing his army no breathing space, he followed the great caravan route across Melitene, descended to the Euphrates, crossed the river and marched upon Tigranocerta. Here he inflicted so signal a defeat upon the army of the Armenian general Mitrobarzanes that Tigranes retired hastily to the north of Armenia, leaving behind him at Tigranocerta a general in charge of his treasure and his harem.† Lucullus now laid siege to Tigranocerta. Tigranes soon recovered from his alarm, changed his tactics, and advanced, as Lucullus had expected,‡ with an army of 80,000 men,§ to relieve the city, without even awaiting Mithridates, who was on his way to join him with a large force of cavalry. Lucullus at once adopted the right manœuvre for a besieging general against a relieving force; he left 6,000 soldiers in the trenches under the command of Murena,‖ and marched to meet the second army with about 14,000 men, horse and foot. When the two forces came in sight of one another on opposite sides of the Tigris, Tigranes and his staff, with the exception of a few old campaigners who knew the Roman temper, expected that in accordance with the routine of their profession the enemy would retire before an army five times their number. But Lucullus, his natural daring heightened by victory, was not the man to falter. One morning he forded the Tigris, threw his small army upon the Armenians like a pack of mastiffs upon a huge flock of sheep, and broke them up into such hopeless confusion, that the king himself was glad to escape with an escort of about a hundred and fifty horse. Having thus rid himself of Tigranes, Lucullus returned to the siege of Tigranocerta, which surrendered soon afterwards.

69 B.C.

* See the judicious criticisms of Reinach, M. E., 358, n. 1, on the figures given by Plutarch, Luc., 24, and App., Mithr., 84.

† Plut., Luc., 24–25. ‡ *Id.*, 26.

§ Reinach, M. E., 360, is right in following Memnon, 57, who gives the lowest estimate.

‖ Plut., Luc., 27.

69 B.C. In the elation of this signal success, Lucullus gave a sudden revelation of the generous instincts of his nature, which had been eclipsed and almost extinguished by the morbid impatience of his ambition, and the tension at which he had lived during the last few years. He seems to have desired to show, by some act of striking magnanimity, his respectful admiration for Hellenic culture. The vassals of Tigranes who surrendered to Lucullus were treated with clemency; Antiochus Asiaticus was recognised as King of Syria; the wives and property of all the Greeks in Tigranocerta were scrupulously respected; and the many Greek and barbarian settlers whom Tigranes had forcibly deported to people his capital were sent back to their native countries. At the same time he recognised that for once his legions had a right to a part of the 8000 talents which he found in the royal treasury and of the other 2700 talents which he made by the sale of loot, while in addition, as an agreeable surprise after the hardships of the campaign, each soldier received a personal present of 800 drachmæ. The army was then sent into winter quarters in Gordiene. In this delightful country Lucullus, now master of the Armenian provinces south of the Tigris, spent the winter months dreaming of still grander exploits for the following year, when he would revive the adventures of Alexander the Great, invade Persia and conquer the Parthians, to whom he had already sent an embassy to dissuade them from an alliance with Tigranes.

Lucullus and Hellenism.

[Nearly £2,000,000.]

Lucullus and Alexander. The headstrong Senator who, amid the petty intrigues of a frivolous aristocracy at Rome, had painfully secured for himself the command of a small mountain province, and who had disembarked in Asia at the head of an insignificant and hastily trained army—the last expiring effort, as many thought, of a decaying Empire—had now, within six years, and with no addition to his forces, become a worthy rival or successor to Alexander himself. Bold, untiring, and unwaveringly self-confident, never an instant in hesitation, acting always on his own responsibility and as if there were no home government to be considered, he seemed to know no obstacle that could block his triumphal advance. Always on the march, whether over the plains of Syria and Cilicia or through the snowy defiles of Taurus, he would face armies five times as numerous as his own, and set out on the morrow of victory upon some new and still more hazardous enterprise as though he needed no repose and had no vision of the last limit of his ambition.

After ransacking store upon store of Oriental treasure, he yet enjoyed playing the part of the great patron of Hellenism, and playing it in his own characteristic fashion by a capricious extravagance of generosity unparalleled in the military history of Rome. 69 B.C.

The import of bullion into Italy.

Now that the superstitious populace of the East revered him almost as a god, Italy might surely have been expected to admire him as the creator of the new imperialism. But the mysterious demon of adventure and unrest, which was to grant Lucullus and the other great spirits of his generation no peace till they had left an enduring mark in the records of humanity, racked thousands of their humbler fellow countrymen also. Italy was indeed just entering upon a grave economic crisis, pregnant with great issues for her future development. At this moment indeed there was a great abundance of money throughout the country. In addition to the stores accumulated by preceding generals, there were new masses of treasure, won in the war or as interest on the booty previously acquired; there was the capital that Marcus Lucullus had brought back from the pillage of Thracian villages or Greek towns on the Black Sea; that sent home by his brother Lucius; the interest on capital let out at usury or invested in land and buildings in different parts of the Empire; loot that private soldiers and officers had brought home on their return from active service, and finally the tribute paid into the State Treasury. The Republic had at that time an annual budget of 50 million drachmæ.* Calculating a ratio of 15 to 1 between silver and gold (which is that which subsisted in Europe previous to the last fall in silver), this would mean a total of over £1,500,000, the greater part of which came from the provinces.†

But the demand for money was increasing even more rapidly than the supply. It was needed, and in ever-increasing quantities, to buy from all parts of the Empire the corn neces-

* Plut., Pomp., 45.

† The relation seems, however, to have been more favourable to silver, perhaps ordinarily 12 : 1. This would make the corresponding sum even greater. But we ought also to make allowance for the greater value of the precious metals in antiquity, which it is very difficult to reckon. Yet, even if we quadruple the figures in value, making them equal to £6,000,000 of our money, the budget of the greatest Empire in antiquity still remains less than that of one of the wealthier small States of modern Europe, such as Holland, Switzerland or Belgium. This should help us to realise the comparative poverty of the ancient world.

69 B.C. sary to feed the metropolis. It was needed for military preparations, and to maintain the armies of Spain, Macedonia and Narbonese Gaul. It was needed for loans to private individuals, to cities, and to foreign sovereigns, for the satisfaction of the growing taste for luxury among all classes, and above all, and in enormous sums, for speculation, which was now beginning to infect the public with the gambling spirit in every part of Italy. Within the last few years the commercial movement which originated in the re-establishment of order after the Revolution had continued on its course with ever-increasing velocity. Men and women, nobles and plebeians, rich capitalists and country landowners, small merchants, artisans and freedmen, all excited by the wildest and most illusory expectations, were engaged in a wild scramble for the sale and purchase of the soil of Italy. This sudden mania for land speculation was, in the main, the result of three causes. It was due, firstly, to the law of Spurius Thorius, which, by converting a large part of the soil into private property, had increased the amount of land to be bought and sold; secondly, to the commercial spirit which had been growing steadily for the last century and a half, and finally to the conferment of citizen rights upon all the Italians. An Italian now only needed the presence of seven Roman citizens to be able to buy and sell land in Italy by the method of *mancipatio*. He could buy in quantities as he bought corn, not buying such and such an estate with such and such boundaries, but so many acres of land in a particular district.* Many people bought and sold land as rapidly as in Australia to-day, speculating on the rise and fall of prices. Others bought slaves capable of being trained into good cultivators, and planted vines, olives and fruit trees to compete with the produce of the East. But as the great majority of speculators were not in possession of sufficient capital to gamble with, they hastened to employ and, of course, to abuse the expedient of the mortgage, which had recently been introduced from Greece, and greatly facilitated the giving of credit.† One man who had bought a piece of land mortgaged it to buy slaves and plant vines. Another, who possessed a site in a town, mortgaged it to raise money to build on it. Others mortgaged their lands to invest sums in the provinces, either in Asia or in Africa, to

Land speculation.

* Weber, R. A. G., 98 ff.

† Wlassak, Edict and Klageform, p. 136. *Cf.* Dareste, N. R. H. D., 1877, p. 171.

private individuals, or cities, or sovereigns, hoping that the venture would be profitable in the long run.* No one felt any disquietude at the rapid rise which was simultaneously taking place in the price of money. After having lightly contracted one debt to improve conditions of cultivation, to build a house, and live in great style, a man would as lightly incur a second to pay off the excessive interest on the first, thus sinking deeper and deeper into debt, always in the hope of eventually repaying in full, and risking, of course, the loss of everything that he had.† There was a surprising number of Italians who found themselves in this predicament.‡ On the other hand, any one who was in possession of capital and knew how to lay it out with skill, was of course in a position to amass fabulous wealth. 69 B.C.

Speculations of Crassus.

No one used his opportunities more successfully than Crassus, who devoted all his energy to this one object. He did not, like so many of his less cautious contemporaries, buy up land at absurdly high prices in the expectation that it would rise still further in value. His favourite speculation was to assist speculators who had embarked on an enterprise without the necessary capital. For instance, he bought up a large number of slaves in the East, choosing with care those who understood the art of building, such as engineers, architects, and master masons. He then established in his house a regular school to teach the art of masonry to young slaves, and hired these out to small builders who were too poor to buy them out of their own pocket. Another new source of income which he tapped proved exceedingly lucrative. Since the houses at Rome were mostly built of wood and the Ædiles had so far neglected to organise efficient measures of prevention, fires were at this time exceedingly frequent. This suggested to him a very ingenious idea. He organised a regular fire brigade from amongst his slaves, and established watch stations in every part of Rome. As soon as

* Cic., Pro Sulla, 20.

† See the very important passage in Cicero's Catilinarian Orations (ii. viii. 18), where there is an admirable description of the economic condition of the Italian countryside with its numbers of indebted proprietors. We know that there was a perfect mania for the new methods of cultivation in Italy at this time, and a large part of the trouble was due to the keenness to experiment with them. The speech was made in 63. It is a justifiable assumption that the development had begun by 68.

‡ See in Plut., Crass., 2, the interesting remark of Crassus on the subject of house and land speculations at Rome. *Cf.* Sall., Cat., ii. 16; Plut., Cic., 10.

69 B.C. a fire broke out, the watch ran to give notice to the brigade. The firemen turned out, but accompanied by a representative of Crassus, who bought up, practically for nothing, the house which was on fire, and sometimes all the neighbouring houses which happened to be threatened as well. The bargain once concluded, he had the fire put out and the house re-built. In this way he secured possession of a large number of houses at a trifling cost, and became one of the largest landlords at Rome both in houses and land, which he was then able, of course, to exchange, to sell and to buy up again almost as he chose.* Having become in this way one of the richest, if not the richest, man in Rome, his power steadily increasing with every rise in the price of money, Crassus soon became a dominating figure in the Senate and the electorate, and indeed among all classes of the community. Behind him he had a whole troop or army of assistants, administrators and secretaries, and amongst the innumerable names that figured in his ledgers were tax-farmers and merchants, builders to whom he had lent slaves, numberless persons who were tenants of his houses, and even Senators to whom he had made private advances.

Re-emergence of the Social Question.

This growing embarrassment gradually brought on a financial depression, which reacted in its turn upon politics. The popular movement became more violent and assumed a social rather than a political form—no uncommon development in a democracy where there are glaring inequalities in the distribution of wealth. There was no more enthusiasm for the continuance of the constitutional reforms which had been so hopefully undertaken in 70. The question which had stirred the passions of Italy for an entire decade now scarcely excited a spark of interest. The Democratic party seemed to have relapsed into its old weakness and disorder.

Disappearance of the Democratic leaders.

It lacked both programme and leaders. Crassus, who was now completely out of touch with Pompey, had re-entered the ranks of the Conservatives, with whom he now habitually acted. Pompey scarcely showed himself in public, seldom came down to the Forum to plead and admitted only a small number of intimates to the privilege of his friendship.† Cæsar, for his part, having nothing better to do in this period of political truce, was profiting by the relations of his family with the high capitalist bourgeoisie to run into debt, and attempting to court popularity with the people by his prodigal expenditure, his winning manners, his persuasive eloquence, and

* Plut., Crass., 2. † Plut., Pomp., 23.

any ingenious and daring stroke which was calculated to impress the popular fancy. Knowing, for instance, that whatever opinions the proletariat might profess it would always preserve a lurking reverence for illustrious descent, he was no longer content to be a mere nephew of Marius, but claimed to be descended on his father's side from the King Ancus Martius and on his mother's from the goddess Venus herself. This was hardly perhaps a very exalted form of activity, but for the moment there seemed nothing better to do. 69 B.C.

The Tribunes' agitation against Lucullus.

But the lull was more apparent than real. If Pompey was affecting to be tired of politics, his silence and reserve were only adopted to make the people feel his loss. He was determined to have his revenge upon Crassus and the Conservatives, and to be sent, he cared not how, to replace Lucullus in the East. As he had nothing more to hope from the Senate, where Crassus was supreme, he was secretly maturing a far-reaching scheme which would force the government to recall Lucullus and put him in his place. The movement was inaugurated in 69 by a skilful agitation among all classes of the community. Pompey's share in the campaign cannot be fixed with certainty. It is probable that he used his influence to back the widespread complaints against Lucullus' provincial reforms, trying to win over the financiers by pledging himself to their abolition. Of his activity in other directions we can speak with more assurance. There is no doubt that it was Pompey who was the soul of the agitation set on foot at this time by the Tribunes of the people, who employed against his rival every artifice of popular insinuation and invective. It is never difficult to play upon the passions of the mob at a period of commercial depression. The Tribunes harped steadily on the same telling refrain. At a moment when thousands in Italy were on the verge of starvation or bankruptcy, a small knot of millionaires was quietly appropriating enormous masses of booty which belonged by rights to the State, that is to all the citizens.* They directed their most venomous shafts against Lucullus, who was just now conducting the most lucrative campaign of all. The public listened gladly to their onslaughts. If a few rich and eminent citizens testified to their admiration according to a growing custom, particularly among bachelors, by leaving him substantial bequests at their death,† the poor and ignorant populace gave credence to every

* *Cf.* Cic., De Leg. Agr., i. iv. 12; ii. xxii. 59.

† Cic., Pro Flac., xxxiv. 85.

69 B.C. rumour circulated by his enemies about the treasures which he was sending home from the East. Men even went so far as to expend pity on the Kings of Armenia and the Orient whom he preferred to rob, so it was said, in order to fill his own purse rather than carry on regular warfare and execute the orders of the Senate. Thus it came to be thought that his Eastern command had already lasted too long.* After the battle of Tigranocerta he was even accused by common report of having omitted to pursue Tigranes simply in order to prolong the war and keep open opportunities for plunder.† Some almost went so far as to reproach the Senate for not checking him midway in his career of victory.

Lucullus deprived of the governorship of Asia.

Far away in the interior of Asia, Lucullus gave little heed to an agitation, which, had it been what it seemed, he might safely have ignored. But behind the trumpets of the Tribunes and the shouting of the populace Pompey and the financiers lay securely entrenched. It was a powerful coalition; and, with public opinion to back it up, it became irresistible. In the course of the year 69, although Lucullus was strongly supported in the Senate by Crassus and the Conservatives, the Senate was compelled by an angry public and the intrigues of the financiers to take some action. Desirous to do the least possible injury to Lucullus whilst removing the most obvious of the capitalist grievances, it deprived Lucullus of the government of the province of Asia for the year 68, entrusting it instead to a pro-Prætor.‡ This was the recompense of a grateful country for his victories of the preceding year.

First revolt of the legions.

But Pompey was still unsatisfied. It was not long before he found supporters on whom he had scarcely reckoned in the soldiers of Lucullus themselves. Lucullus was now ready for his great expedition into Persia. But when in the spring of 68 his subordinate Sornatius received orders to join his general for the march upon Ctesiphon the legions, which had been wintering in Pontus, refused to obey.§ The old fashioned martinet had succeeded in exhausting the patience

* Plut., Luc., 24 and 33.

† Dion, xxxvi. 330, fr. 2 (Gros).

‡ The year 68 is a conjecture, but it seems more probable than 69, which is Reinach's view (M. E., 374), since according to Dion (xxxvi. 330, fr. 2, Gros), the diminution of his authority took place after the battle of Tigranocerta. A second diminution took place in the following year with the appointment of Q. Marcius Rex to the governorship of Cilicia. Thus Lucullus's fall was brought about gradually, as is only natural in view of his powerful position.

§ Reinach, M. E., 366.

of his soldiers, who were tired of being treated like the legionaries of a Cincinnatus or a Scipio. Their example was infectious. Even the forces that Lucullus had with him in Gordiene showed a disinclination to be marched into Persia. The unbending disciplinarian was for once obliged to yield. Abandoning his proposed plan of campaign he decided instead to invade Armenia. Little did he suspect that he and his army were being slowly enmeshed in the invisible net-work of intrigue which was being woven at Rome in the house of Pompey. From the moment when Pompey realised the prevalence of discontent in the legions of his rival, he set himself to devise a terrible vengeance—to compel the recall and degradation of Lucullus by provoking a general mutiny among his soldiers. 68 B.C.

CHAPTER XI

THE FALL OF LUCULLUS

The Classical Renaissance at Rome at the time of Cæsar—Pasiteles—The political philosophy of Aristotle—The early political ideas of Cæsar—Cæsar's Quæstorship—New campaign of Lucullus against Mithridates and Tigranes—Battle of the Arsaniades—Publius Clodius in the camp of Lucullus—The winter in Armenia and second mutiny of the legions—Intrigues at Rome against Lucullus—The famine of 67 and the pirates—Pompey Dictator of the Seas—The war against the pirates—Recall of Lucullus—Importance of Lucullus' career.

Cæsar's Quæstorship.

It was in this same year that Quintus Metellus went out as pro-Consul to Crete, and Cæsar set foot upon the lowest rung of the political ladder, the Quæstorship,* as one of the most brilliant among the younger members of the Democratic party. His ability no less than his illustrious birth and distinguished bearing attracted sympathy in all classes, even amongst the less fanatical Conservatives. Our evidence does not enable us to judge what were the articles of his political creed at this time, but it is fair to infer from his rank, as from his character and actions, that they were not such as to alienate him from men of moderate and serious opinions in all parties.

Character of the young Cæsar.

It is indeed impossible to understand Cæsar's extraordinary career and the singular place which he occupies in the history of Rome without keeping continually in view the variety of the influences which enriched his strange and many-sided individuality. Cæsar had not the reckless and impulsive temperament, or the unbridled imagination, which so often distinguish the leaders of great movements. He was still simply an elegant young political aspirant, of winning manners and prodigal habits, but hampered by delicate health, keen, alert, and ambitious, devoted to politics or any other form

* Plut., Cæs., 5; Vell., ii. 43, 4. As regards the date of his election see Drümann, G. R., iii. 140.

of excitement, and excellently endowed for every kind of intellectual activity. Despite all the counter-attractions of a fashionable and somewhat dissolute career, he had been able to make himself one of the best speakers of his age.* He had devoted himself passionately to the study of astronomy, a science which had been virtually discovered about a century before this time by Hipparchus, and had since made great progress in Asia and Egypt;† and he was probably also conversant with the Greek treatises on tactics and strategy. But the studies in which he was most deeply interested were of a more purely æsthetic character; for he was refining and cultivating his taste in the hope of applying it to the organisation of popular festivals and the designing and building of public works. In short, he was a man of fine, lively and supple intelligence, who, despite his highstrung nature, could by no means be called headstrong or unbalanced. At heart he was an artist and a student; yet so manifold were his gifts and so great his skill and energy in applying them, that he might be sure of success, if he desired it, in the arena of politics or war. 68 B.C.

Such a man on his entry into politics would naturally feel an affinity for the moderate school of thought; he would feel this all the more intensely if he lived among the upper classes, in surroundings where, through the prevailing scepticism, even apart from more selfish motives, the clamour of the demagogues passed unheard or unheeded. It is not impossible therefore to form a more or less probable notion of the opinions which a young man of his class would be likely to hold. His teachers were, of course, not Romans but Greeks, and the ideas with which they inspired him were not of native Italian growth. We shall most easily detect them by glancing for a moment at the great contemporary Renaissance—at the peculiar influence exercised by the civilisation of Greece upon the educated classes of Cæsar's day. **His early opinions.**

When the Italians first began to be the pupils of the Greeks, they looked back over two great ages of Hellenism which had followed one upon the other and passed away. There was the classical Greece of Sophocles and Phidias, Pericles and Plato, Demosthenes and Aristotle, with its countless small independent city communities, its glorious and turbulent democracies, its local schools of art, each characteristic of a separate people, **The influence of Greece on Rome.**

* Cic., Brut., lxxii. 252; Suet., Cæs., 55; Quint., I. O. x. i. 114; Tac. de Or., 21; Plut., Cæs., 3.

† Macrob., Sat., i. 16; Plin., xviii. 25, 214.

68 B.C. its dialect-literature, its private schools of metaphysical philosophy. There was also the cosmopolitan Greece of the great bureaucratic kingdoms founded by Alexander in Asia and Africa, with their splendid capitals, their common language, their court literature, their accumulations of knowledge, their royal institutions for the encouragement of learning, their taste for special sciences and for the new philosophies of conduct, like those of the Stoics and Epicureans. In the Rome of Cæsar's day, all that was most living and expressive in this long filiation of ideas found a ready and welcome acceptance. The various currents of thought and feeling in the two great ages of Hellenism met to foam and clash in the whirlpool of an imperial metropolis. Here the student of philosophy found disciples of Plato disputing against the followers of Zeno and Epicurus, and the young poet could choose between the decadent romanticism of the Alexandrians or the strict classical tradition of the great tragedians and lyrists. In the field of eloquence, the flowers and mannerisms of the Asiatic orators vied with the pure and delicate graces of the Attic stylists; in art, those who found no pleasure in the dexterous refinement of the Hellenistic masterpieces of Asia and Egypt could reserve a fastidious admiration for the archaic sobriety of the age of Phidias. There were scholars who spent their lives upon minute researches in some special science that had been painfully nurtured amid the solitudes of a royal museum, while others, with a more catholic, if less conscientious, application, wandered gaily over the vast range of encyclopædic study opened up by the private teachers of the classical period. Within the space of one short generation, Rome was living, with a feverish intensity, through the successive phases of a civilisation which it had taken five centuries to bring to perfection.

The Classical Renaissance.

But in the midst of all these contending and contradictory influences, it was the elder Greece which men recalled with the sincerest enthusiasm. Demosthenes became the model of perfection imitated by every orator; Cicero loved to associate the florid magnificence of Asiatic eloquence with the old classical sobriety of form. The pure artistic tradition of Phidias and Polyclitus, of Scopas, Praxiteles and Lysippus, established a lasting supremacy over the Rhodian and other Asiatic schools.* The greatest sculptor of that age, Pasiteles, who was a Greek of South Italy and thus a Roman citizen,

Pasiteles.

* Overbeck, G. G., P., ii. 424.

was the head of a school of Neo-attic sculptors who made copies of old classical masterpieces; he also produced original work distinguished by an elegance of form and a simplicity of execution which were the fruit of his study of nature and the great archaic models. 68 B.C.

The "Politics" of Aristotle.

It was the same ruling tendency in another field of operation that drove the political thinkers of Rome to the study of Aristotle. What appealed to them most of all in the master of Alexander was his theory of a government which should harmonise the principles of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy.* According to this conception, which is one of the fundamental political ideas of Aristotle, the people should possess sufficient authority to repress the tyranny of government, while the chief power should be in the hands of the rich and noble families, who are to exercise it for the public good and provide an example of civic virtue. A magistrate may, in case of need, be placed in a position of supreme control and invested with the powers of a President of the Republic; but such a President must himself be one of the best citizens in the State; he must govern in strict accordance with the laws, and must, above all, live in scrupulous observance of them himself. The law must, in fact, be regarded as the true, if impersonal, sovereign of the Republic. Without this necessary balance of opposing principles, democracy must inevitably degenerate into mob rule, aristocracy into the tyranny of a caste, and monarchy into that worst of all possible governments, an autocracy of the familiar Asiatic type, good enough perhaps for the emasculated nations of the East, but ill-suited to the superior peoples of Greece. These Aristotelean theories, which had been taken up again by Polybius in his study of Roman society in the age of Scipio Æmilianus, were just now coming to be widely held. Their popularity is easily explained. They harmonised the anti-monarchical and aristocratic traditions of Roman history with the new and encroaching tendencies of democracy, and brought with them the hope of some happy and lasting solution of the political difficulties under which the Republic had been suffering for the last half century.

Cæsar's dream of a Periclean Rome.

It is very probable that Cæsar shared the ideas of his class; that like most of the nobles who at that time owed allegiance

* We shall see in the sequel that the great success of Cicero's *De Republica* in 52 is only explicable on the assumption that these ideas had long been popular in educated circles.

68 B.C. to the Popular party, he was inclined to some policy of conciliation between aristocracy and democracy on the lines of the ideas of Aristotle and Polybius: that he dreamed of a free and conquering Republic, with an art and a culture like those of Athens, but of wider extent and greater powers, a State which would be governed by a hereditary aristocracy, vigorous in administration but emancipated from class prejudice and unfettered by tradition, and which, with the co-operation of the middle class, would make Italy the metropolis of the world for power and riches, for art and science, for eloquence and liberty.

His pecuniary embarrassments.

But even if he had himself been untouched by these tendencies, interest alone would have inclined him to the moderate school. His personal fortune was by no means equal to the expenses entailed by a political career, and he had for some time past been compelled to borrow. As his family had many connections with the knights, it was not difficult for him to raise the money. Many of the rich tax-farmers were ready to lend to the young nephew of Marius, for whom every one predicted a great future, even if they felt by no means sure of recovering their money. Wealthy capitalists had indeed come to regard these loans to politicians as a means of indirect corruption, which ingeniously fortified their influence over the government whilst they themselves remained aloof from political conflicts. But Cæsar could only rely upon the powerful financial support of the knights so long as he took care to retain their confidence; and this he would very soon have forfeited if he had allowed himself to be involved in the revolutionary propaganda of the new tribe of demagogues.

His homage to Marius.

As a matter of fact his Quæstorship, so long as he remained at Rome, was entirely uneventful. He was content with paying exaggerated homage to the ghost of his proscribed uncle, behaviour which might perhaps technically have been classed as revolutionary, though in the existing state of opinion, it was agreeable to all classes. It was generally recognised that the hero of the Raudine Fields deserved to be set among the number of great historical personages, in the place of honour from which party hatred had expelled him; and Cæsar, who had in the course of this year lost both his wife and his aunt, the widow of Marius, was not afraid to carry the statue of the great popular general in the funeral procession.* Soon afterwards he set out for Spain as Quæstor to

* Suet., Cæs., 6; Plut., Cæs., 5.

the Prætor Antistius Vetus,* while Pompey remained at Rome to plan the fall of Lucullus. 68 B.C.

Clodius in the camp of Lucullus.

In the spring of this year Lucullus with his usual hardihood had thrown himself into Armenia dragging after him a small, weary and grumbling army, largely officered by men who were working for Pompey. Amongst those who were sedulously kindling the spirit of mutiny was a brother-in-law of Lucullus himself, a young aristocrat named Publius Clodius, who was suffering from penury and, like so many of his neighbours, hoped to redress this disability in the career of politics.† Yet not even the suspicion of traitors amongst his own family could deter the intrepid Lucullus from endeavouring, with the same small force at his disposal, to eclipse even the daring of his earlier conquests. What induced him to attempt so incredible a feat? It is possible that in the flush of unprecedented success he was blind to the intrigues and disaffection all round him. Yet since the records of this last campaign are too scanty to elucidate his conduct, it is justifiable to offer an alternative suggestion. It may be that suspecting the treachery of his officers, and not daring to repress it by overt measures, Lucullus, always inclined for the bolder course, resolved to meet the danger half way, and to stifle the discontent of his army by a new success as striking as the conquest of Armenia.

Battle of the Arsaniades.

But if his intentions are conjectural, there is no doubt as to his movements. He advanced in a series of great marches as far as the plateau of Lake Van, where he came upon the united armies of Mithridates and Tigranes. The two allies had decided to wait in an entrenched camp on a hill top, on the Roman model, until the early Armenian winter compelled the Roman army to a disastrous retreat. Lucullus, after vainly endeavouring to force on an engagement, attempted to draw the enemy from his camp by an advance upon Artaxata, the Armenian capital. Tigranes, fearing for his harem and his treasure, broke up his camp, followed the Romans and endeavoured to dispute the passage of the Arsaniades. A battle took place on the banks of the river and the Armenian King suffered another defeat.‡ After this victory any other

* Plut., Cæs., 5; Suet., Cæs., 7.

† That Clodius was an instrument of Pompey is clear from Plut., Luc., 34, as also from the probabilities of the case. It can only have been to serve Pompey that he exposed himself to this risk. Nor was he the only case of the kind.

‡ Reinach, M. E., 366-7.

68 B.C. general would have arrested his advance on the approach of autumn. But Lucullus, like a passionate gambler who risks all that he has won by doubling the stakes, decided to drive home his success by dealing a sudden blow at the very heart of the Empire of Tigranes and marched at once upon Artaxata.

Intrigues of Pompey at Rome.

This daring strategy may partly have been prompted by the news from Italy. His position at Rome was now indeed extremely precarious. The popular agitation, which had been almost extinct since the year 70, was once more in full flame. The financial depression had excited all the worst passions of the mob. Italy was beginning to pass through a period of violent ferment in which every act or proposal against the rich and powerful was certain to win the popular approval. It was easy for Pompey to stir up feeling against a Conservative and aristocrat of old lineage like Lucullus, in spite of all that he had achieved for the Roman name. There had been a close and exciting struggle over Eastern policy. After much painful intriguing, the friends of the pro-Consul had secured that the commission entrusted with the organisation of the government of Pontus should be composed of his own partisans. They had even succeeded in making his brother Marcus one of the number. But on another very important point they had been forced to give way before Pompey and the public. Lucullus had been deprived of the Governorship of Cilicia for the following year. It is true, that, as some small compensation, they had given Cilicia to his brother-in-law, Quintus Marcius Rex, who was Consul for that year, in the hope that the conqueror of Pontus would continue to govern the province through his relative. But the contest was becoming more and more unequal, and in spite of all the efforts of Crassus, Pompey and the democrats gained ground daily. Only the capture of Artaxata and the final conquest of Armenia by Lucullus could have revived the fortunes of his partisans at Rome.

Second mutiny of Lucullus' troops.

Although the autumn was now approaching, Lucullus ordered his troops to advance upon Artaxata. Once more, by a supreme application of discipline, he broke down the resistance of the legions. The march was begun; but it did not continue. When the Armenian autumn began to give warning of the early approach of winter, the soldiers revolted and refused to go further. As almost all the officers supported the mutiny and many had even helped to excite it, Lucullus was forced to yield. By the end of October he was back with his army in Mesopotamia.

This inglorious retreat was the first great success of Pompey's cabal. Unfortunately for Lucullus, it soon entailed others of a far more serious character. Once back in Mesopotamia, Clodius, resolved to strike home at once, profited by a temporary absence of Lucullus to provoke a general revolt among the legions, depicting to them in glowing colours the easy conditions of service enjoyed by the troops of Pompey.* Lucullus hastily returned and Clodius was forced to fly. But this series of petty mutinies had infused new spirit into the enemy on whose discouragement they had too confidently reckoned. At the end of the year 68, Mithridates suddenly re-appeared in Pontus with a small army of 8,000 soldiers, appealed to the loyalty of his old subjects, and succeeded in shutting up in Cabira the officer whom Lucullus had left in charge. Lucullus was anxious to relieve him, but the troops refused to march before the spring of 67. It was left to his admiral Triarius to bring reinforcements to Pontus by sea and extricate the garrison of Cabira. Unfortunately Triarius was not able to drive Mithridates out of the country, and was forced to go into winter quarters within view of the hostile army, at Gaziura in the very heart of Pontus. Meanwhile the soldiers of Lucullus were engaged in trading and other delights of relaxation, as though Asia were in a state of complete tranquillity, and no Roman legionary in the slightest danger.† 68 B.C.

Re-appearance of Mithridates.

This news appears to have reached Rome towards the end of the year 68. It only intensified the excitement that was already raging. The situation was a very curious one. The various parties and cliques were in desperate conflict; yet none had so far succeeded in gaining any definite success. The consequence was that all State business was indefinitely delayed; no administrative questions were being decided, and every one was in a state of nervous exasperation. The Conservatives were grumbling at the turn matters had taken in the East, while Pompey and his clique were in no way satisfied with the successes they had so far gained. For all their efforts, Crassus still remained more powerful than Pompey in the Senate, and Pompey did not seem to have improved his chances of obtaining for himself the powers wrested from Lucullus. It was becoming clear every day that his right policy was to appeal directly to the tribes and demand from the people what was refused him by the Senate. This would involve gaining his

Pompey and the electorate.

* Reinach, M. E., 369 ff.

† Sall., Hist., 5 fr. 9 (Maurenbrecker); Reinach, M. E., 370 ff.

67 B.C. position by one of those skilful election manœuvres which the political parties of a generation ago had been in the habit of adopting whenever they felt sufficient confidence in their powers. But Pompey was probably aware that he could not safely reckon upon the success of such an attempt. The great mass of the proletariat was certainly on his side; but it was totally without organisation, whereas the Senators and the knights had a great influence over the voting. He could not therefore be sure that his popularity alone would suffice to win him the elections; and although he used every means to increase his influence he did not feel justified in taking the risk. It was probably with his connivance and on his advice that one of his old Quæstors, Caius Cornelius, a man of integrity but of very mediocre ability, who had been elected Tribune of the people for the year 67, proposed two exceedingly popular Bills, one a law forbidding Roman citizens to lend money in the provinces, which was intended to allay the financial crisis in Italy by stopping the export of capital; another a law taking away from the Senators and bestowing upon the people the right of giving dispensations from the observance of a law. But all these manœuvres would probably have been of little use if an unexpected incident had not upset all calculations and given a different direction to the conflicts of parties, the intrigues of Pompey and the agitation of the public. The change was caused by the outbreak of a terrible famine during the winter.

The famine at Rome.

Men are always inclined to impute their misfortunes to the misdeeds of others. On this occasion the people threw the blame for the famine upon the pirates who intercepted the corn-ships on the high seas, upon the Senate and the magistrates who had for years been unable to repress them, and finally upon Lucullus, whose general Triarius had been sent with a fleet into the Ægean, where he had shown his helplessness by allowing the pirate Athenodorus to sack Delos under his very eyes. The widespread feeling against the Senate and its slackness, which had contributed so greatly to the Democratic victories of the year 70, now showed itself afresh. In the midst of this ferment the two laws proposed by Caius Cornelius provoked what was almost a miniature civil war. There was fighting and bloodshed between armed bands in the Forum. It seemed almost like a return to the old days before the Social War and the Revolution of Marius.

Pompey was quick to realise that all questions of home and

foreign policy must be subordinated to the exigencies of the food supply, and that he had only to appeal to the electors on this question to obtain from them any answer he wished. Renouncing for the moment all schemes of Eastern conquest, he put up one of his supporters, Aulus Gabinius, a man of low origin and moderate fortune,* who was then Tribune of the people, to propose in the Assembly a bill empowering the people to choose, from amongst the Senators of Consular rank, a Dictator of the seas to conduct the campaign against the pirates. The holder of this new post was to have a fleet of 200 ships, a large army, 6,000 talents, 15 lieutenants and absolute proconsular authority for three years over the whole Mediterranean and its coasts up to fifty miles inland, with additional powers of recruiting troops and collecting money in all the provinces.† His plan was exceedingly ingenious. He hoped that the famished voters would pass the law without serious question. If he succeeded in this way in putting an end to the famine he would so increase his popularity that he would in future be able to dispense with the Senate's ratification of his schemes, reduce Crassus to insignificance, and rely upon the Assembly for the satisfaction of all his desires, even including the powers of Lucullus. The first part of his prophecy speedily came true. The Conservatives attempted to oppose the project in the fear that Pompey's novel Dictatorship would eventually affect the commands of Lucullus and Metellus. But the fear of starvation had stirred Rome to the depths. There were noisy demonstrations in the streets, with threats of a revolution if the law was not approved. In the end Pompey was entrusted with powers even wider than those which Gabinius had originally proposed. He was authorised to enrol an army of 120,000 men with 5,000 horse, to form a fleet of 500 ships and to nominate 24 subordinate commanders.‡

67 B.C.

The dictatorship of the seas.

Cæsar, who had lately returned from Spain, was among those who backed up the proposal of Gabinius. The law was indeed far too popular for him to venture to oppose it. But if he was anxious to avoid displeasing the people, he was still more

Cæsar's marriage to Pompeia.

* Drümann, G. R., iii. 39.

† Dion, xxxvi. 21; Plut., Pomp., 25; App., Mithr., 94; Vell., ii, 31.

‡ Dion, xxxvi. 22-35; Plut., Pomp., 26-7; App., Mith., 94. The figures given by these different authorities are not really divergent, as will be seen later. There is a real discrepancy about the number of the subordinates. App., Mith., 95, and Florus iii. 6, do not agree about their names. See Drümann, G. R., iv., 407 n. 36.

67 B.C. anxious to make the greatest possible number of friends in rich and powerful circles. It was with this object that, some time in the last three years, he had married the wealthy and influential Pompeia, daughter of Quintus Pompeius Rufus, an aristocrat and ardent reactionary who had been killed in 88 by the partisans of Marius, and of Cornelia, daughter of Sulla. For the nephew of Marius to marry a granddaughter of Sulla and the daughter of a victim of the popular revolution, is a proof of the shortness of political memories at Rome; but it also throws an interesting light on the ambitions which Cæsar was entertaining at this time.* Aristocratic marriages were now only regarded as means to maintain or to increase political influence. Cæsar would probably not have married Pompeia if he had not been anxious to ally himself with the great Conservative nobility. A wealthy marriage of this sort at once raised his credit amongst the knights, connected him with many influential Senators, and helped the party of Sulla to draw a veil over his origin and the democratic incidents of his early career. Thus, if the agreement made in 70 between the advanced aristocrats and the popular party proved to be lasting, Cæsar might one day be the nominee both of the people and of the better elements among the Conservative classes. His marriage was in fact an attempt to put into practice the Aristotelian programme of conciliation between the democracy and the nobility. It shows that Cæsar was at this moment in no way preoccupied by the fresh outbreak of hostilities between the Conservatives and the popular party, and did not regard it as sufficiently important to impede the gradual process of conciliation between all classes and parties which had been going on since the death of Sulla.

Defeat of Triarius.

Meanwhile, at the beginning of the spring of 67, military operations were again resumed. Lucullus moved to the help of Triarius, and Pompey set out to recruit his forces. He could only beat up a small army in the place of the 120,000 soldiers allowed him, while, in the neglected condition of the Roman Navy the harbours of the allies yielded him no more than 270 of the 500 ships which he was assigned.† He

* Plut., Cæs., 4; Suet., Cæs., 6; Drümann, G. R., iii., 142, iv., 311, 314. Drümann is mistaken in thinking that his marriage with Pompeia would bring Cæsar into closer touch with Pompey. Pompeia and Pompey were not related to one another. See the genealogical table given in Drümann's own book.

† Kromayer, Phil., lvi. 429 ff., thus ingeniously reconciles the

distributed them among his numerous subordinates, who were chosen from amongst prominent members of the upper classes and the Conservative party,* amongst them Marcus Terentius Varro, entrusting each of them with the task of clearing a given portion of the Mediterranean. Meanwhile Lucullus had ascertained in the course of his march, that Triarius, either through defective information or in the desire of winning a campaign by himself, had given battle to Mithridates at Gaziura and been defeated with great loss.† Lucullus asked his brother-in-law Marcius for reinforcements from Cilicia and marched rapidly to his assistance. But when he had come up with Mithridates, he was unable to force a general engagement, or to efface the impression produced by the defeat of his subordinate. 67 B.C.

Pompey, on the other hand, was surprisingly successful in what was generally considered a very formidable task. In an impressionable society like that of Rome, and at a time of universal excitement, it had been possible to regard the pirates as a dangerous adversary. In reality their apparent strength was due entirely to the negligence of Rome. The only country over which they exercised any effective control was Crete, where they had established a sort of military government which Quintus Metellus had been engaged for a year past in attacking. Their forces were not numerous and had, since the fall of their powerful patron Mithridates, fallen into complete disorganisation. The news that a Dictator of the seas had been appointed at Rome and was collecting a large force against them, soon spread round the Mediterranean coasts to add to the discouragement already caused by the annexation of Pontus. This impression was only increased by the fate of the first captures made by the Dictator. Pompey, who was working for a rapid success rather than for a permanent settlement, made a clever use of the momentary confusion of the enemy. After treating the first batches of prisoners with excessive severity, he suddenly modified his methods, offered a free pardon to all who submitted, and sent them to re-people deserted and devastated towns. This policy laid him open to grave criticism, for in accordance with Roman law and tradition, it was shameful and almost criminal to treat pirates

Pompey quiets the pirates.

discrepancy between Plut., Pomp., 26 and App., Mithr., 94, as to the size of Pompey's fleet.

* App., Mithr., 96; Florus, iii. 6; Drümann, G. R., iv. 408.

† App., Mithr., 89; Plut., Luc., 35; Cic., Pro Leg. Man., ix. 25.

67 B.C. with such clemency. The Conservatives, of course, attempted to make capital out of his behaviour. But Pompey, strong in the popular support, was only anxious for an immediate victory and felt no respect for the traditions of brutality still so dear to the nobility. The pirates were reassured by a policy which was tantamount to amnesty. Before long they appeared spontaneously from all sides to surrender their ships and their arms to the Roman generals.* For some time afterwards the sea remained comparatively unmolested, and Pompey was greeted at Rome as the wonderful hero who had cleared the seas in a few weeks. In reality he had accomplished very little. As soon as the panic inspired by his Dictatorship had passed off, the pirates re-armed their ships and began once more to sweep the seas as of old.†

The supersession of Lucullus.

Meanwhile Lucullus, who had really given the death-blow to a mighty monarchy, was on the point of being robbed of all the fruits of his labour. As soon as the news of Triarius' defeat reached Rome, the noisy troop of Pompey's partisans set to work once more. Gabinius proposed a second bill depriving Lucullus of the command of the war against Mithridates and the provinces of Pontus and Cilicia, and bestowing them on the Consul Manius Acilius Glabrio; at the same time the legions of Fimbria were recalled and all who disobeyed were threatened with the confiscation of their property.‡ In the face of strong popular demonstrations the Senate had for once to let the bill pass.

Third and final mutiny in Lucullus' camp.

Lucullus was now in a terrible dilemma. Marcius, unwilling to compromise himself in the cause of his brother-in-law, refused to grant him the reinforcements he asked, on the pretext that his soldiers were unwilling to march.§ Meanwhile a rumour spread that Tigranes was moving up with a large army to join forces with Mithridates,‖ and almost simul-

* App., Mithr., 96, gives a brief but accurate judgment on this sham war. The ease of the operations is attested by their quickness. See Dion, xxxvi. 35, and also Kromayer, Phil., lvi. 430. Plut., Pomp., 27–8, gives rather an exaggerated account.

† Drümann, G. R., iv., 413.

‡ Sallust, Hist., 5, fr. 13 (Maurenbr.); App., Mithr., 90. From this passage of Appian and from Plut., Luc., 35 (confirmed by Dion, xxxvi. 330, fr. 14, Gros), according to which the troops mutinied during the march against Tigranes on the ground that Lucullus was no longer their general, it appears to me a safe conclusion that this second *lex Gabinia* was voted after the defeat of Triarius, and consequently after the first law. Appian is clearly wrong in attributing the whole course of events to the Senate. § Sall., Hist., 5, fr. 15 (Maurenbr.).

‖ Dion, xxxvi. 330, fr. 14 (Gros).

taneously the new pro-Consul of Asia made public the edict of his recall.* But Lucullus was as yet in no mood to submit. Calmly ignoring the Senatorial decree, he proceeded to march upon Tigranes, in the hope of surprising him on his way, hindering his junction with Mithridates and inflicting upon him a defeat that would give a new turn to events. But this desperate effort was his last. In the course of the march his weary troops broke out into open mutiny, and, relying upon the decree of recall, refused to follow a man who could no longer claim to be their general. Lucullus suddenly awoke to the mistaken severity of his *régime*, and with characteristic impetuosity attempted to redeem it. He visited his old campaigners in their tents, spoke to them with the genuine affection that his ambitions and anxieties had too long obscured, and made familiar and personal appeals to the leaders of the revolt. It was all in vain. The soldiers declared that they were ready to wait until the end of the year; if by that time the enemy had not shown his face, they would severally disperse, those of them who had been dismissed, to their own homes, the others to join the standard of Glabrio. Lucullus had no alternative but to yield. While Mithridates was re-conquering his old kingdom and Triarius pillaging Cappadocia, the man who two years before had dominated Asia like a second Alexander, became in his own camp the butt and the laughing-stock of his soldiers.† 67 B.C.

Thus strangely and suddenly ended the political and military career of Lucullus. During the six years which he spent in the East he had made a revolution in Roman politics which it would be impossible to over-emphasise. His part in the history of Rome is so analogous to that of Napoleon in the history of Europe that we may perhaps justly define him as the Napoleon of the last century of the Republic. He found the foreign policy of the Roman Republic in very much the same condition as that in which Napoleon found the foreign policy of Europe at the end of the eighteenth century. It was embarrassed by traditions of slackness, paralysed by an indecision which took alarm at shadows and gave way at once before any determined opposition, and accustomed to regard intrigue and procrastination as satisfactory substitutes for rapid and resolute action. It felt an almost sacred respect for the established order, and an extreme terror of laying a finger upon its familiar workings.

Significance of Lucullus in the history of Rome.

* App., Mithr., 90; Dion, xxxvi. 330, fr. 14 (Gros).
† Plut., Luc., 35.

67 B.C. It habitually preferred diplomacy to war, and never understood how to make the most of a success or drive home any vigorous effort, generally accepting some compromise which settled the question for the moment along the line of least resistance at the risk of raising new and inevitable complications in the immediate future. This policy was not indeed without a certain sagacity of its own, but it had become stultified by the very exaggeration of its own virtues. Like Napoleon eighteen centuries later, Lucullus effected a revolution in the methods of government. He substituted war for negotiation as the usual method of solving the difficulties of Eastern policy. He replaced the interminable machinations of Senatorial intrigue by the sharp and vivid impression of his swift campaigns, with their bewildering attacks and their complete and amazing victories. By the adoption of a strong and sustained policy of aggression he succeeded in becoming the arbiter of the entire East, reducing one State after another to helplessness in a series of almost foolhardy campaigns. In this he was as overwhelmingly successful as Napoleon himself; for he re-established the equilibrium between the obsolete policy of the Senate and the changed circumstances of the day. A policy capable, if not carried to exaggeration, of doing Rome such service as this was certain to find converts and imitators. Pompey and Cæsar were to be the two great pupils of Lucullus and to reap in the field where he had sown. For Lucullus was reserved the part, pathetic but not inglorious, of the pioneer who encounters all the risks and enjoys but the scanty first-fruits of success. His fall was not simply the result of the intrigues of Pompey. Those intrigues would have been powerless if they had not revealed to his enemies the one weak point in his armour. It is indeed the cause of Lucullus' downfall which is perhaps the most significant lesson of his career. By an effort of genius the aristocrat of ancient lineage, who had learnt in the school of Rutilius Rufus and was the devoted and disinterested friend of Sulla, had been able to liberate himself from the deadening fetters of caste and become the creator of the new imperialism. But there was one sphere in which he had still remained the inflexible aristocrat of the olden time. He had never outgrown the old-fashioned conception of the duty of a general towards his soldiers. In this strange inconsistency lay the seeds of his disgrace. The new imperialism required generals of a different type from the men who had held command during the first two Punic Wars. For the troops

had been changing with their generals. The discipline and obedience of traditional soldiering had passed away beyond recall with the opening of the East. When it was too late, Lucullus awoke to his mistake. Not all his signal qualities availed to save him from one of the cruellest humiliations a Roman general ever suffered. His fall marks the final failure of the aristocratic restoration attempted by Sulla. It was because he remained faithful to the old ideals and customs, in one of their noblest and greatest applications, that the noblest and greatest of the friends of Sulla had to pass on to others the gain and the glory of the new policy which he had been the first to conceive and to execute. 67 B.C.

CHAPTER XII

CICERO AND THE MANILIAN LAW

Pompey, Metellus and the Cretan pirates—The financiers and the panic in Asia—The Manilian Law—Cicero—His speech in favour of the Law—Pompey Commander-in-chief in the East—Pompey and Lucullus at Danala—The last battle of Mithridates—Pompey and the King of Armenia.

Pompey, Metellus and the Cretan pirates.

WHILE Pompey was conquering the pirates by kindness, Quintus Metellus was spreading fire and bloodshed throughout Crete, massacring his prisoners and growing rich on their loot. Metellus belonged to the small circle of reactionary Conservatives who would have liked to govern the Empire on the system of Scipio Æmilianus, and his severity was a deliberate protest against the clemency of the demagogue Pompey who was not ashamed to court the favour of the people by making terms with the evil-doers. In their desperation the pirates appealed to Pompey with offers of submission, and Pompey, only too glad to humiliate Metellus, eagerly accepted them. On the pretext that the Gabinian Law put Crete under his orders, he despatched Lucius Octavius to replace Metellus; but Metellus retorted with a declaration that Crete was outside Pompey's jurisdiction and inflicted condign punishment upon the cities which, in reliance upon Pompey's decree, had refused him obedience. Lucius Octavius was very nearly forced into maintaining the rights of his chief by defending the pirates against a Roman pro-Consul. Happily more serious incidents intervened to distract Pompey from this awkward quarrel.*

The panic in Asia.

Towards the end of the year 67, grave news reached Rome from the East. Financiers received letter upon letter from their correspondents in Asia giving alarming reports about the state of the province. Lucullus was no longer in command

* Plut., Pomp., 29; App., Sic., vi. 2; Flor., iii. 7; Dion, 329, 1–2 Gros.

of the army, and Glabrio and Marcius were men of little capacity. Mithridates had again become master of Pontus. Tigranes had broken into Cappadocia, and flying columns had burnt the frontier villages * and made their appearance in the heart of Bithynia. These reports caused a regular panic in the capital. Men thought of Mithridates as already at Pergamus, of a general massacre of Italians and confiscation of property on the model of 88. Before long every one was agreed that the ordinary magistrates were insufficient to deal with so serious a situation—a view not infrequently taken by the Democrats, but shared for once on this occasion by many of the Conservatives and financiers. 66 B.C.

The friends of Pompey were not slow to turn all this to their advantage. At the beginning of 66 the Tribune Manilius proposed that Pompey should be entrusted, in addition to the powers which he already held, with the government of Asia, Bithynia, Cilicia, the chief command in the operations against Mithridates and Tigranes, and the right of declaring war and concluding alliances as he thought good, in the name of the Roman people.† This was nothing less than a legal authorisation in Pompey's favour of the policy of personal initiative which Lucullus had been the first to apply. Crassus, to whom the success of Pompey in the war against the pirates had been exceedingly galling, was disgusted to see his rival carrying off the palm in their four years duel of intrigue. The Conservative party, which had only just condemned Pompey's clemency to the pirates, was unwilling to pass a second law in his favour, thus openly recognising a policy which it had tolerated or ignored in the case of Lucullus. Some of its more eminent members, such as Catulus and Hortensius, even endeavoured to oppose the project by appealing to Republican sentiment and demonstrating that a Dictatorship of this sort would be monarchical in character.‡ The proposal of Manilius.

But in spite of all difficulties of distance and opposition, Pompey's success over the pirates was for the moment more influential than the coalition of Crassus, the Conservatives, and tradition. A new power had appeared in Italian politics, intermittent in its working, but invincible whenever its influence was exerted—the force of public opinion. As so often The force of public opinion.

* Cic., Pro Leg., Man., 2.
† Plut., Pomp., 30; App., Mithr., 97; Dion, xxxvi. 40–41.
‡ Plut., Pomp., 30; Cic., Pro Leg. Man., xvii. 52.

66 B.C. happens in democracies with a rising standard of comfort and specialisation, the wealthy and well-to-do landlords, the financiers, merchants and professional men, the artists and men of leisure, who together composed the upper classes, were too much wrapped up in private business or pleasure to have time or thought for public affairs, which were thus gradually monopolised by a small minority of professional politicians. Except at some emergency of unusual interest the educated public stood entirely aloof from politics. But on the rare occasions when exceptional enthusiasm or anxiety stirred the slumbering passions of this electorate into activity there was no party or clique or political association sufficiently powerful to resist it. It had already once made trial of its power; for in 70 it was the violent outbreak of a long-stored resentment against the Conservative government which stirred many Conservatives to transfer their support to the opposite party. But the enthusiasm had cooled down as quickly as it had been roused: and it was in vain that Cæsar, Pompey and the Tribunes had attempted to reawaken it. Now, however, quite suddenly there was a fresh outburst of excitement. In the enthusiasm of Pompey's success against the pirates, all Italy acclaimed him as the greatest general of the age, the man who alone had proved himself worthy of their confidence and capable of dealing a death-blow to the indomitable Mithridates.

Character of Cicero.

It was indeed not merely the irresponsible enthusiasm of the man in the street which clamoured for Pompey to be Dictator of the East. The financiers and the wealthy classes, the numerous Senators and knights who had invested capital in Asia, joined with young aspirants like Cæsar in the general outcry. Pompey obtained support, too, from what was perhaps a still more significant quarter. He had on his side the first representative at Rome of a figure common in all democracies as they rise in the scale of civilisation, the man of letters who becomes through his writings a real force amongst his contemporaries. Since his sensational prosecution of Verres, Cicero had quietly continued his training, reading and studying very widely, refining his oratorical style, and exercising his facility for composition so successfully as to become one of the quickest and most concentrated workers of the day. In a society that hungered for intellectual gratification, he had succeeded, notwithstanding the obscurity of his origin and the smallness of his means, in winning sufficient

influence and popularity to be elected to the Ædileship and the Prætorship.* He now counted as one of the most conspicuous figures in Roman life. His influence was of a peculiar and unprecedented kind. Like all typical men of letters, he was better able to sway the imagination and emotions of masses of men than to dominate the will of single individuals. When he stood up to speak before a large popular audience, the power which he seemed to wield was extraordinary. The marvellous hold which he had thus obtained over the minds of his hearers in an age where no one was untouched by the flame of personal ambition, had kindled in him a vague passion to become the Demosthenes of the great Italian democracy. Like many another soldier and man of letters before and since, he began to delude himself with the notion that he was destined to be a great administrator. Yet all the time, for each of the separate individuals out of whom the huge crowds which he held spellbound with his eloquence were composed, Cicero was little more than a weak and contemptible little figure in the rough arena of politics; not all his fine moral qualities or professions of independence could shield him against the arts of intrigue and intimidation. He was neither cruel, nor rapacious, nor insincere; his morals were pure, and his affections strong and deeply-rooted. But there were qualities in his nature which forbade him to be powerful. He was of a morbidly nervous and susceptible disposition, tormented by the pinpricks of an almost feminine vanity and by a sensibility that was alive to every petty annoyance. After moments of exaltation in which he felt himself to be a leader of men and made display of his self-confidence in mordant criticism and the boldest and most complacent professions of ambition, he would periodically collapse, as though there were two natures fighting in his bosom, into fits of the most abject dejection, suspecting a possible enemy in every one around him, and lavishing the most pitiful and humiliating thanks on the first mediocrity who happened to make some banal observation in his favour. Above all, he was never able to free himself from a certain attitude of snobbishness towards 66 B.C.

* G. Boissier, *Ciceron et ses amis*, Paris, 1902, p. 44, has well remarked that "up to the age of forty Cicero was only what we should call a barrister." But I think he is wrong in regarding forum eloquence as the high road to political distinction. It was a great exception for a lawyer to succeed in politics at this time; Cicero was the first to reach the high magistracies without riches and nobility by his literary reputation.

66 B.C. the upper classes. He was very greedy of notoriety. He was proud of being known to every one and of seeing the poorer people turn round to look at him in the streets. He was afraid lest a word should be breathed against him in the greatest houses of Rome, and longed ardently, and for a long time hopelessly, for an *entrée* into the house of any aristocrat of authentic lineage and untarnished record. He was radiant with satisfaction at the many friendships which his oratorical renown had brought him among the rich capitalists, many of whom were exempt from all traditions of exclusiveness and, particularly if they were men of culture like Atticus, gladly welcomed to their society a man who had risen from the ranks by his pen. In a word, even after he had become a great figure in history, Cicero remained in many respects what he had been from the beginning—a small bourgeois from a country town, whose vanity fell an easy prey to the compliments of the plutocracy and the nobility. All this serves to explain why, at this critical juncture in his career, he followed Cæsar's example, and courted admiration simultaneously from the Democrats and the Conservatives: although unlike Cæsar, and just because he was a bourgeois born, he inclined rather towards the nobility. It explains also why he had prosecuted Verres and assailed the corrupt Conservative administration in the year of the democratic revival, and why he had afterwards refused to be a candidate for the Tribuneship in order not to compromise his reputation in the eyes of the aristocrats.*

The "De Imperio Cneii Pompeii."

The Bill of Manilius now offered an extraordinarily favourable opportunity for pleasing several parties at once—not only the rich capitalists and a large part of the aristocracy, but also the whole of the proletariat. Cicero, who was at that time Prætor, came forward in support of the bill in a speech of great eloquence, delivered in his best manner. He knew his public. He assured the rich merchants and Senators, who were trembling for their investments, the well-to-do tax-farmers, the shopkeepers and the artisans, that the old kingdom of Pergamus was the richest province of the Empire, that not only did it supply the treasury with a large part of its revenues, but that most of the invested capital of the tax-farmers, merchants and other private individuals was laid out there, and that it was therefore the duty of all classes to unite in defending it

* Dion, xxxvi. 41.

to the death.* Cæsar, who intended to stand for the Ædileship in 65 and was using every effort to gain popularity, also appeared in support of the bill, which was thus eventually passed, much to the indignation of Crassus. Pompey received the good news in Cilicia where he had gone into winter quarters, and immediately set about making preparations for his campaign. 66 B.C.

Mithridates and the Parthians.

We have now reached the spring of 66. Still, as ever, the favourite of fortune, Pompey had been entrusted with the despatch of a man already wounded to the death. Mithridates had quarrelled with Tigranes, who suspected him with sowing disaffection among his sons in the hope of raising to the throne of Armenia a man more devoted to his cause. Abandoned by Tigranes, without a fleet, and with no more than about 30,000 infantry and a few thousand cavalry,† he had only one more chance, and that but a weak one. There was just a hope that Phraates, who had succeeded Arsaces on the throne of Parthia, would come to his aid. But Pompey hastened to send an embassy to Phraates to persuade him to turn his arms against Tigranes,‡ and recover the lost provinces of his kingdom. He was anxious to be done with intriguing and to strike a rapid blow against Rome's old enemy.

Pompey's interview with Lucullus.

But before his hands were free to act there was one delicate duty to perform. He had come out to relieve Lucullus of his command; but Lucullus was still obstinately encamped in the midst of his mutinous legions. Leaving behind him in Cilicia§ the three legions of Marcius, Pompey advanced with a large force which was to serve both for the campaign against Mithridates and to persuade Lucullus of the necessity of submission. The young favourite of fortune advanced in the flush of success to encounter the sour and war-worn veteran. There were many in both camps who awaited the meeting with unconcealed anxiety. It was impossible to predict the effect of an interview. Mutual friends did their best to secure that all might go off with dignity and without scandal. The two generals were induced to meet at Danala in Galatia.‖ The interview opened auspiciously with mutual compliments, but Lucullus who had never been a skilful diplomatist, endeavoured to maintain an

* See esp., Pro Leg. Man., ch. vii.
† App., Mithr., 97; Plut., Pomp., 32.
‡ Reinach, M. E., 382; Rawlinson, S. O. M., 143.
§ This is clear from Dion, xxxvi. 46.
‖ Strabo, xii. 5, 2 (567.)

66 B.C. impossible position. He declared that nothing remained for Pompey but to return to Rome, since he himself had already brought the war to a conclusion. Hot words ensued, and the generals parted after an unpleasantly violent scene.* Lucullus even went so far as to publish decrees and distribute the lands he had conquered in Galatia, trying in his way to make others believe, or perhaps rather to make himself believe, that he had no intention of giving way. But Pompey had no difficulty in drawing off all his soldiers to his own standard, with the exception of 1600 whom he left to accompany their general to Italy.

Pompey pursues Mithridates.

With an army of scarcely 30,000 men,† Pompey now crossed the frontier of Pontus. Following the precedent set him by Lucullus in the campaign of 74,‡ Mithridates first tried by skirmishing to hamper the commissariat of the enemy. But when he had lost part of his cavalry in an ambush and Pompey had succeeded in opening a quicker and surer means of communication by Acelisene, he abandoned offensive tactics and retired to a strong position at Dasteira. Pompey then sent for reinforcements from Cilicia. Mithridates now realised that he would soon be surrounded by overwhelmingly superior forces.§ One night he eluded the vigilance of the Roman sentinels, and slipped out in the hope of crossing the Euphrates and continuing the war in Armenia. But Pompey went in pursuit, overtook him after three days, and inflicted upon him a severe defeat,‖ during which Mithridates only just succeeded in escaping. With the remnant of his army he made his way to Sinoria, on the borders of Armenia, the strongest of his fortresses. There he took possession of a huge sum of money, gave his soldiers a year's pay, distributed amongst them a great part

* Dion, xxxvi. 44; Plut., Pomp., 31; Lut., 36.

† This is the figure given by Dion, xxxvi. 45. Reinach, M. E., 382, n. 2, reckons 60,000 men in Pompey's army, calculating by the sums distributed to the veterans at the end of the war. But Mommsen (R. G., iii. 116, 117), has thrown doubt on the correctness of these sums and their distribution. Moreover, Reinach's figure would include all the survivors of the whole Eastern war, and not merely the soldiers who took part in the first campaign. It must be remembered that the three Cilician legions took no part in it.

‡ Dion, xxxvi. 45. App., Mith., 98–9, is less clear, but gives the same general impression of the war.

§ App., Mith., 99, does not name Dasteira, but certainly alludes to the place described in Strabo xii. 10, 8 (555). See Dion, xxxvi. 46, where the country wrongly called Anaitis is certainly Acelisene, as is clear from Strabo xi. 14, 16 (552).

‖ App., Mithr., 100; Liv., Epit., 101; Dion, xxxvi. 47. There are divergences in the account of the battle.

of his other riches, and sent to ask the hospitality of Tigranes, on whose frontier he was. Then, not daring to await a reply within such easy reach of the Romans, he started off once more with a small escort, recruiting troops as he went, marched up the right bank of the Euphrates to its source and down again into Colchis, which, amid the disorder of the last few years, had practically recovered its independence, and finally succeeded in reaching Dioscurias, the last of the great Greek cities on the coast, at the foot of the Caucasus.* 66 B.C. [Mingrelia.]

Pompey and Tigranes

Pompey, whose strategy had been seen at its best in the campaign, was now temporarily helpless. He was not in a position to lead his whole army across the mountains in pursuit of this band of fugitives. Nor was there anything to be lost by postponing the invasion of Colchis till the following year. Mithridates was surrounded and practically taken in a trap. He could not return to Armenia; he could not elude the Roman squadrons by sea; nor could he fly to the Crimea, where his son Machares was now on the throne, for Machares had become an ally of the Romans; moreover he was cut off from the Crimea by the barbarous tribes of the Caucasus, whom even at the time of his greatest power he had always been unable to reduce. Pompey therefore preferred to turn aside to Armenia, which he over-ran without difficulty. While Pompey had been fighting against Mithridates, Tigranes had been attacked by Phraates and his own rebellious son. But Phraates had soon retired and his son, alarmed at his isolation, had sent to Pompey for help. Tigranes attempted to resist, but when he ascertained that Pompey was preparing to attack him, he put the envoys of Mithridates in chains, set a price upon his head, and came alone and on foot as a suppliant to the Roman camp. Pompey received him kindly, reassured him by the restoration of all the hereditary domains of his family, and reconciled him to his son, who was rewarded with the grant of Sophene. Tigranes received the title of friend and ally of the Roman people and was forced to pay 6,000 talents to Pompey personally, 50 drachmæ to each of the soldiers, 1,000 to each of the centurions and 10,000 to each of the military Tribunes.† He then led his troops northwards to winter quarters on the banks of the Kur on the extreme northern [Cyrus.]

* Reinach, M. E., 387 ff.

† App., Mithr., 104. 6,000 talents are over £1,100,000, 50 drachmæ about £1 10s., 1000 about £32, 10,000 about £320, without taking into account the very much greater value of the precious metals in antiquity.

66 B.C. frontier of Armenia and prepared for his invasion of Colchis by entering into relations with the Albanians, who inhabit Cirvan and Daghestan, and with the Iberians of Georgia. But if he thought that he had at last cornered Mithridates, he was mistaken. The indomitable veteran had himself been making overtures to the Iberians and Albanians and had persuaded them to help him in a last effort against Rome. In December the legions in winter quarters on the banks of the Kur were suddenly surprised by the Albanians. The attack was repulsed; and Pompey, still favoured by fortune,[1] thus received a useful warning to be thoroughly on his guard against these treacherous barbarians.*

* See Reinach, M. E., 388–394.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EGYPTIAN PROJECT

Mithridates escapes to the Crimea—The Indian trade route and Pompey's expedition to Cirvan and Daghestan—The archives and treasures of Mithridates—The speculations and ambitions of Crassus—Cæsar's debts—Cæsar in Crassus' pay—The conspiracy of 66—Return of Lucullus to Italy—Lucullus and the cherry tree—Cotta Ponticus and the Heracleote trial—Cæsar as Ædile—Cheap bread: the Egyptian scheme—Its failure—Italy and the Empire—The question of debt.

Pompey's triumphal progress through Western Asia

THE surprise attack of the Albanians was the last moment of real danger in the campaign. In the spring of 65 Pompey set out on what turned out to be a triumphal progress through Western Asia, slowly wending his way, gathering spoils as he went, through the great monarchies, the free cities, the maritime republics, the petty theocracies, and the numerous brigand or private communities which had sprung up out of the chaos of the Empire of Alexander. He passed by the legendary scenes of the poetry and mythology of Greece; he visited lands and cities and battlefields whose names had long been familiar to the western imagination; he contemplated the infinite variety of barbarous nations scattered through Asia between the Caucasus and Arabia, with every diversity of language, custom and religion; he became acquainted with the wonders and the depravity of that ancient industrial and Hellenised Orient which lived by exploiting the barbarians in its service and differed so profoundly from the younger and more buoyant civilisation of Italy: its weird and impressive cults compounded of layer upon layer of superstition, its intensive and laborious agriculture, where the soil allowed it, the arts and industries of the famous cities which manufactured the luxuries of the whole of the Mediterranean world: above all, the men and women who lived in these great industrial centres—their labouring population, sober, hard-working and thrifty, yet quick and intelligent and strangely sensitive

65 B.C. to the influence of religion: their class of professional intellectuals, philosophers and scientists, still so rare a phenomenon in Italy: and the royal Courts with their vice and luxury, their untold treasures, and the elaborate and striking ceremonial which excited so much curiosity amongst the simple-minded democracy of Italy.

The Indian trade route.

At the beginning of the spring Pompey invaded and overran the country of the Iberians, beneath the snow-peaks of the mountains where Prometheus had once been chained. He passed on into the valley of the Rion, the ancient Phasis, and descended into the plain of Colchis. Here, in the country of Medea and the Argonauts, he had thought at last to lay hands on Mithridates.* He was too late. The undaunted veteran had once more performed an exploit that seemed outside the range of possibility. Forcing a passage with his small army through the tribes of the Caucasus, he had penetrated successfully along the four hundred miles of hostile and difficult coast which separated him from the Crimea. Once in the Crimea, he fell upon his rebellious son, forced him to fly for his life, and thus conquered himself a new kingdom.† Pompey was too cautious a general to attempt to invade the Crimea by sea. Having arranged for a blockade during his absence, he set out along the valley of the Kur, upon an expedition against the Albanians, whom he seems to have surprised by the aid of treachery. Thence he returned into Lesser Armenia,‡ bringing back to the adventurous Italian merchants exact and welcome information about the mysterious overland trade route to India. This route started from the port of Phasis, ascended that river to its source, crossing thence into the valley of the Kur, and over the country of the Iberians and Albanians to the Caspian; once across the Caspian, it made for the valley of the Amu Daria (the ancient Oxus), which did not flow, as to-day, into the Sea of Aral, but into the Caspian.§

The treasure of Mithridates.

In the course of these expeditions the troops had naturally amassed large stores of precious metals and slaves. When he reached Lesser Armenia, Pompey spent the rest of the year in reducing the last resisting fortresses and taking possession of the immense treasures of Mithridates. The greater part of

* Plut., Pomp., 34; Dion, xxxvii., 1–3; App., Mithr., 103; Reinach, M. E., 394.

† App., Mith., 101–2; Strabo, xi. 2, 13 (496.)

‡ Dion, xxxvii., 3; Plut., Pomp., 35; Reinach, M. E., 398, n. 1.

§ Strabo, xi. 7, 3 (509); Pliny, H. N. vi. 17, 52.

it he found in the citadel of Talaura, which contained 2000 coffers of onyx encrusted with gold, and so huge a store of phials, vases, couches, beds, bridles and breastplates, covered with gold and precious stones, that it took a month to make their inventory.* In another citadel he came upon the correspondence and secret memoirs of Mithridates, the recipes for his poisons, and an interesting correspondence between the King of Pontus and his favourite Monima.† The whole of the treasure of the last great Hellenising monarch of Asia had now passed into the possession of the Italian democracy. 65 B.C.

The party game.

But the democracy was in no mood to enjoy its victories. All through 66 the Italian situation had grown steadily worse. After the passionate interest taken in the debates on the Manilian law and in the course of affairs in Asia, the public had relapsed into its normal condition of sulky torpor. The financial crisis was becoming acute. All classes in the State were suffering from the pressure of debt; all felt the irritation that waits on disappointed expectations. They were in a fickle and impressionable mood, yet at the same time utterly indifferent to the projects of the official political parties. Now that order had been re-established in the East, there was in fact only one great problem which really interested the mass of the nation, the problem of debt; and this neither of the two parties dared to bring to the front. In default of more serious questions the two small cliques of politicians who represented the Conservative and popular parties, were reduced to a war of intrigue and slander, carried on principally in the law-courts, which seemed to increase in violence as it diminished in interest. In their attempts to rouse some show of excitement in an indifferent public, both parties lost their temper, and both were equally unsuccessful.

Crassus and cheap bread.

A situation difficult enough in itself was still further complicated by a manœuvre on the part of Crassus. The millionaire, who ever since his Consulship had given his support to the Conservatives in their struggle against Pompey, had now passed over to the popular party, and, in the place and during the absence of Pompey, undertaken to be its leader. His object is not difficult to divine. After the two rebuffs he had suffered by the Gabinian and Manilian laws he was longing for a revenge, and he proposed to obtain it by an imitation of the intrigues of his successful rival. The democracy wanted conquests and victories and the sack of cities; Pompey had gained his

* App., Mith., 115. † Plut., Pomp., 37.

66 B.C. great popularity because his success against the pirates was thought to have checked the famine in the metropolis. Crassus was a man of business. He was prepared to accept the public in their present mood and to supply them with just what they desired. He would come forward as their general in a new enterprise which would for ever assure to Rome the blessing of cheap food. Here was a second disciple for the unhappy Lucullus. Whilst Pompey continued to apply his policy in Asia, Crassus was dreaming of carrying it into an altogether new quarter of the world, into the great and wealthy kingdom of Egypt.

Egypt. It must be confessed that the banker had shown perspicacity in the selection of his victim. Egypt was not only the richest country in the world; it was also one of the few countries so fertile that the annual harvest largely exceeded the needs of the people and was available, with the royal permission, for export to less fortunate regions. If Egypt were annexed to Rome the surplus of its annual harvest could be exported in its entirety to the metropolis. The conquest of Egypt therefore meant for the Romans what the abolition of corn duties means for us; it meant cheap bread. No doubt some pretext was needed for the Roman intervention; but this was easily found in the will of Alexander II., who at his death in 81, had bequeathed Egypt to the Romans. There were many now who regretted that the Senate had at that time been so timid as to refuse his bequest. There would, however, be no difficulty in going back upon its decision, for with its habitual want of logic the Senate had at the same time refused to recognise the new King Ptolemy Auletes, whose royal descent was somewhat dubious and who had for years been vainly intriguing to secure recognition.*

Crassus seeks an agent. Crassus, who knew his fellow-Senators, was well aware that some sharp external pressure would be needed if this traditional policy was to be reversed in favour of aggressive measures against a peaceful country which had done nothing to provoke hostility. The Senate was not yet educated up to the new imperialism of Lucullus. He must therefore follow the precedent of Pompey in raising some excitement in the public mind. If he addressed his appeal directly to the mob, he could have his campaign voted by the electors, who did not share the diplomatic scruples of the Senate and were beginning to feel enthusiastic about expansion in general, regardless of the

* Barbagallo, R. R. E., 120.

particular circumstances of the case. But this manœuvre was bound to fail unless he had first made his peace with the Democratic party and gained over to his side all the more active and skilful members of Pompey's clique. After several years of conflict such a reconciliation was by no means easily achieved. Crassus appears to have found the personal friends of his rival a serious obstacle in his path, since in the agitation which follows we find none of the men who had helped Pompey taking a prominent part. We are told that Gabinius was at this time preparing to go out as second in command to his chief in the East, and it is highly probable that many of Pompey's friends met Crassus' advances with suspicion and did not care to brave the displeasure of their patron. One only among the more prominent popular politicians was found favourable to Crassus, but he was the ablest and most adroit of them all—Cæsar. 66 B.C.

Cæsar was now approaching a critical moment in his career. He had hitherto given a general support to the popular party but without forming any close personal relations or joining in any intrigues of the kind which his friend Clodius had undertaken in the army of Lucullus. Thanks to this policy, he had remained, more than any other of the rising members of the Democratic party, in the confidence of his Conservative opponents. Yet for all this he was as yet only on the threshold of a political career. He had gone no farther than the Ædileship, to which he had been elected for the following year. What exercised a still greater influence over his actions was that he was in serious pecuniary straits. At a time when popular enthusiasm was at a low ebb it was more than ever necessary for him to have plenty of money; there was every prospect that his expenditure would rise steadily, and no prospect of meeting it till he eventually reached the Prætorship and recouped himself out of the spoils of his provincial administration. Moreover the temporary depression in trade was discouraging the capitalists from advancing funds; as money became increasingly dear, they dispensed less and less of it among their *habitués*. In this situation the ambition and jealousy of Crassus were a very gold-mine for an impecunious aspirant. Under the imperative necessity of making some money, Cæsar braved the hostility of his party colleagues and, for the first time in his life, allowed himself to become the instrument of the millionaire. But he still hoped that it would involve no breach with Pompey. The latter surely could not complain if Cæsar, after doing his best to obtain him his command in

Cæsar sells himself to Crassus.

66 B.C. the East, now performed a similar service, in respect of Egypt, for his distinguished fellow-citizen. It was easy for him to argue down his scruples in the ingenuous irresponsibility of youth. He would be useful to Crassus, and Crassus would be exceedingly useful to him; at the same time he would be maintaining his friendly relationship with Pompey, and doing nothing to compromise the position he had already acquired. In short it was a master-stroke, which would leave him on good terms with every one. Cæsar had been no more able than his fellows to escape the demoralising influences which seem inherent in politics, and more especially in the politics of a mercantile democracy. The result was soon clear to view. The young noble who had taken up the study of politics in a spirit of aristocratic detachment was now to be mixed up with all the base tribes of trimmers and demagogues who regarded politics simply as a convenient means for the attainment of low and selfish ends.*

The conspiracy of 66.

Not long after he had concluded this coalition with Crassus in 66, we find Cæsar involved in a very unpleasant intrigue. At the Consular elections for 65 the Senate was most anxious to secure the return of Lucius Aurelius Cotta and Cneius Manlius Torquatus; it had therefore erased from the list of candidates the name of Lucius Sergius Catiline, an old partisan of Sulla who had just returned from a pro-Prætorship in Africa, on the double pretext that his nomination had not been received in time and that he was under prosecution for extortion. When, in spite of this intrigue, two other candidates, Publius Autronius and Publius Sulla, nephew of the Dictator, had been elected, the son of Torquatus† had accused the two Consuls designate of extortion and he intrigued so successfully that they were both condemned and a new election proclaimed. This time the Senatorial candidates were duly elected. The popular party, which had taken up the cause of Autronius and Sulla as a convenient weapon against the Conservatives, had succeeded in rousing a good deal of public feeling on the subject, and some disorders had actually broken out during the hearing of the trial.‡ This encouraged them to still bolder measures after their condemnation, and they entered into a conspiracy to bring about a third election by assassinating the new Consuls on the first day of the year.

* See Appendix C.

† Drümann, R. G., ii. 514, has shown that it was not the candidate, himself, but his son.

‡ Cic., Pro Sul., 5.

The conspiracy was joined by Catiline and a few other needy young aristocrats, such as Cnaeus Piso; and, what is more serious, it appears to have been approved in secret by Cæsar and Crassus, though, for fear of compromising their reputation, they refused any active support. This was an act of very great imprudence on their part, and politicians of their skill and adroitness would never have committed it if they had not practically been forced into dangerous measures by the difficulties attending their Egyptian project. In spite of his personal solicitations, the supporters of Pompey obstinately refused to lend Crassus any assistance, and Cæsar and the millionaire still remained alone in the field. It was not easy for them by their own unaided efforts to stir up the people and override the opposition of the Senate and the magistrates. In this situation it would have been exceedingly useful to have two Consuls favourable to their scheme, and it was this that induced them to countenance the projected *coup d'état* of Sulla and Antonius. Unfortunately the conspiracy was discovered, and public opinion was much disturbed at the strange light it threw on the morals of the upper classes. All parties united in demanding an exemplary penalty. But when the Senate met to discuss it, Crassus intervened so vigorously in the debate as not only to save the conspirators from punishment but even to secure them compensation for their defeat. Perhaps he thought that a bold attitude would most effectually silence the unpleasant rumours that were abroad about his complicity in the plot; or it may have pleased him to give a display of his influence over the Senate. At any rate that body, which was filled with his own debtors, yielded to his appeal, and no prosecutions were undertaken. Piso was sent on an extraordinary mission to Spain, while Torquatus himself prepared to defend Catiline in his case for extortion.* In this way the matter was soon hushed up; but Crassus and Cæsar had learnt to be more careful of such entanglements in the future.

66 B.C.

Crassus and Cæsar and the conspiracy.

Meanwhile Lucullus had returned to Italy with his miserable escort of 1600 soldiers and huge stores of gold and silver in bullion and ingots.† He brought with him to the West a

* Sall., Cat., 18; Suet., Cæs., 9; Ascon., in Cic., Tog. Cand.; Cic., Pro. Sul., iv. 11; xxiv., 68; in Cat. i. 6, 15; Liv., Per., 101; Dion, xxxvi. 42. John, E. G. C. V., p. 706–14, has made it certain that Sallust is wrong in making Catiline the ringleader in this conspiracy. He played quite a secondary part. See Stern, C., p. 16 f.; Tarentino C. C., 29 f.; Bellezza, F. S., p. 59 f. The reasons for the version given above are explained in Appendix C. † Plut., Luc., 37.

65 B.C. more precious possession than these in the cherry-tree, which began from this time onwards to be generally cultivated in Italy.* It is strange to reflect that in the snowy plumage of a cherry-tree in a spring orchard we have a trophy, that has survived the convulsions of twenty centuries of history, of the great Eastern conquests of Lucullus. But if posterity forgets the men to whom its thanks are due, their contemporaries too often ignore them. Despite all his victories and his spoils, and despite the unknown treasure he carried in his train, Lucullus found the gates of Rome sternly closed against his modest triumphal procession. Feeling was running high between the two political groups, and the most trivial incident was used by one party or the other as a pretext for attacking their rivals. Suddenly re-entering the world of politics after years of absence, Lucullus found himself being assailed by the popular party as though he were a criminal or a brigand. In the hope of exciting the passions of the mob against the upper classes, demagogues threw into his teeth, as the friend of Sulla, all that they had been ready to tolerate and even praise in Pompey, his indiscriminate looting, his unauthorised campaigns, and the blunders and brutalities of his generals. Every time the Senate met to discuss the triumph of Lucullus, the Tribunes interposed their veto.

Return of Lucullus.

Trial of Cotta Ponticus.

Nor did they reserve their criticisms for Lucullus; they soon turned their attention to his officers and subordinates, in particular to Cotta, the captor of Heraclea. On Cotta's return the Senate had decreed him unusual honours and allowed him the title of Ponticus. But when he began to make display of the wealth he had acquired during the war the Tribunes took up his case, threatened to bring a prosecution against him, and demanded the release of the prisoners of Heraclea. Perceiving the storm-clouds gathering on the horizon, Cotta prudently decided to cast out ballast. But though he disgorged large sums out of his booty to the public treasury, the Democratic party continued its attacks. Cotta's contributions they declared, were an insult and an absurdity; he had kept the greater part for himself. When the law by which his prisoners were to be released was brought before the Assembly, the popular leaders arranged a pathetic scene for the occasion. They hunted up from the highways and hedges, from private houses and the barracks of the slave-merchants, all the Heracleote captives that they could find, dressed them in mourning,

* Pliny, xv. 25, 102.

presented them with wreaths of olive, and sent them thus attired into the assembly. Then a certain Thrasimedes of Heraclea rose to speak. He recalled the old friendship between Heraclea and Rome, he described the long-drawn agonies of the siege, the horrors of the sack, the carnage and the fire, to the accompaniment of a pitiful chorus of sobs from the slaves. The public was so impressed that Cotta was hardly allowed to open his mouth, and thought himself exceedingly lucky to escape a sentence of exile.* 65 B.C.

Cæsar's Ædileship.

The Conservatives replied to all this, as Conservatives are in the habit of replying in similar situations, by accusing their opponents of working for a revolution. When Pompey returned from the East, they declared, at the head of his victorious legions, he would have himself proclaimed sole ruler and overturn the government of the Republic. Yet these alarms did not prevent them from picking a quarrel with Crassus and Cæsar. After the failure of their conspiracy the two allies had reverted to their original project of provoking a great popular agitation for the conquest of Egypt, and they were now attempting by various ingenious expedients to gain the favour of the people. Crassus who was Censor, proposed to inscribe in the registers of the citizens the inhabitants of Transpadane Gaul—a thoroughly democratic idea which might be regarded as the natural sequel and conclusion of the great popular movement for the emancipation of Italy. Meanwhile Cæsar, who was Ædile, was trying to take men's breath away by prodigies of extravagance, of course at Crassus' expense. He had the Capitol, the Forum, and the basilicas decorated with pictures and statues, celebrated the Megalesian and Roman games with unprecedented magnificence and gave a splendid gladiatorial show in memory of his father, in which the fighters for the first time used spears and arrows of gold and silver. He further organised, in booths temporarily constructed on the Forum and in the basilicas, an exhibition of all the objects used in the games and in the decoration of public buildings.†

The trophies of Marius.

But if the Senate had been intimidated by Crassus to close its eyes to the conspiracy, this barefaced bribery now stirred the more reactionary Conservatives to indignation. They showed particular hostility towards Cæsar, who was less power-

* Memnon, 59.

† Suet., Cæs., 10; Plut., Cæs., 5; Dion, xxxvii. 8; Pliny, N. H., xxxiii. 3, 53.

65 B.C. ful than the millionaire; their old distrust against the nephew of Marius, a strange compound of genuine alarm and aristocratic contempt, was once more awakened. Catulus, the most respected figure among the old Conservatives, at length found courage to show open resistance. In his capacity of Censor he opposed the project of Crassus for granting citizenship to the Transpadanes, and acted with so much vigour that Crassus was forced to give up the idea.* But suddenly one morning a strange rumour ran through the city. The trophies of Marius, which had been removed by Sulla, had been re-established on the Capitol during the night. It was Cæsar who had prepared this surprise,† which was immensely successful. During the next few days there was a general rush to the Capitol to see the trophies of the wars against Jugurtha and the Cimbri and gaze on the venerated features of the hero whom the nobility had so implacably pursued. Many of Marius' veterans were seen to break into tears, as they recalled the incidents of their campaigns. The Senate felt its weakness in the face of this popular outburst, and did not venture to have the trophies removed. But Catulus openly attacked Cæsar in the Senate, and charged him with attempting to subvert the State, no longer by methods of subterranean conspiracy, but openly and in the eye of the public.

Cæsar and the Conservatives.

This attack by Catulus marks the commencement of the new struggle between Cæsar and the Conservatives, a struggle which was to last for the rest of his life and entail consequences of such far-reaching importance. The idea of conciliation between the two parties, of which Cæsar in his student days had been so confident, was now definitely abandoned. Excited by these preliminary skirmishes, the Conservatives now redoubled their efforts and extended their attacks to Gabinius, whom they attempted to prevent from leaving for the East to take up his duties as Pompey's subordinate. In this they were unsuccessful; ‡ but when Cæsar, thinking his ground had been sufficiently prepared, at length brought forward with the help of the Tribunes the question of the conquest of Egypt, they opposed it with an energy which was no longer looked for from the Senate.§ As Cæsar appealed to the will of King Alexander, they naturally fought him by throwing doubts upon its authen-

* Dion, xxxvii., 9. † Suet., Cæs., 11; Plut., Cæs., 6.

‡ Drümann, G. R., iii. 44.

§ Plut., Cras., 13; Suet., Cæs., 11. Suet. is mistaken as to the motives alleged for the expedition, as is clear from Cic., in Leg. Agr., ii.

ticity; but they went further, and affirmed that, even granting it to be authentic, Rome had no business to cast longing eyes upon every country and pick a quarrel with every nation.* 65 B.C.

The War party and the Peace party.

This opposition of the small Conservative clique to the projects of Cæsar and Crassus is significant not so much for its immediate as for its more distant consequences. So far the party had not adopted a clear attitude towards the new imperialism which had been created by one of its members. It had allowed Lucullus freedom of action, but it had opposed the ambitions of Pompey and declared them contrary to the spirit of the Republican constitution. Upon the policy in itself there had as yet been no pronouncement. But from this time onwards the Conservative party took a clear stand against aggression and expansion, and associated itself with the cause of peace, of which Italy must sooner or later feel the need.

Failure of the Egyptian project.

The Conservatives could at first only congratulate themselves on their choice of policy. They succeeded without difficulty in checkmating the designs of Crassus and Cæsar. Ingenious as it was in itself, the scheme for the conquest of Egypt never succeeded in taking hold of the popular imagination. The promise of cheap food from the granary of the world left the public unmoved. There were several reasons for its failure. A considerable number of the partisans of Pompey distrusted Crassus and refused to support him. Nor was Crassus helped by the chance occurrence of any striking incident, like the final attack of Mithridates upon Asia, which had been so useful to Pompey. The moment, too, was not well chosen. The rich classes and especially the financiers, who had hitherto favoured and encouraged the Democrats, were beginning to fight shy of the violent propaganda of the popular movement and the legislation in which it resulted; they were gradually inclining once more to the Conservatives, whose leaders were cleverly holding out baits, such for instance as the restoration to the knights of the privilege abolished by Sulla of sitting on the Senatorial seats in the theatre. As for the middle class, the late Democratic victories had brought it nothing except possibly a general discontent at the excessive debts which it had contracted. It was disillusioned, disgusted, and out of spirits. Cæsar who had an extraordinary instinct for gauging public

xvi. f., and he is wrong, too, in thinking that Cæsar desired to go to Egypt. See in App., C., the reasons for preferring Plutarch's version that it was Crassus who desired to go.

* Cic. de Leg. Agr., ii. xvi., 42.

65 B.C. opinion, saw that the agitation had no future and soon induced Crassus to abandon the whole project.*

Italy and the Empire.

Thus the party conflict increased in violence with every incident in the struggle. And yet it was for shadows and not for realities that they were fighting, and the number of combatants diminished as their temper and excitement rose. The upper classes were no longer in possession, as at the time of the Gracchi, of political and economic advantages which stood in the way of middle class development. If in the heyday of democracy the traditions of the old era still preserved a few exceptional privileges for the last survivors of a glorious nobility, if the greater offices were still the appanage of the representatives of the old historic families, yet, regarded as a whole, Italy now consisted of one united ruling class bound together by a tie of mutual advantage for the exploitation of her Empire. In the division of the spoil there were doubtless inequalities of distribution; but no class in Italy was totally excluded. The son of a small landholder with a large family could enlist in the army and make sufficient money to buy a good property and a few slaves or to set himself up in business. In the army itself the position of Centurion, sometimes also that of *Præfectus Fabrum*, or chief of the engineers, was reserved for Italians from Tuscany or Romagna or Emilia or the Abruzzi or Apulia, men of modest and even humble origin who had risen from the ranks by ability and courage. Anyone who had sufficient capital at his disposal could become a contractor for public works or military equipment; he could emigrate to Greece or Asia, or stay in the capital and become Tribune, Ædile, or Quæstor. He could take part in business or in the profits of campaigning, or serve as a dependent at Rome to some powerful statesman and follow in his escort when he went out to his province. A young man of ability, even if in comparatively straitened circumstances, could generally pick up an education: he could then become attached to some political chief, and so become an advocate or a consulting lawyer, making money by his profession or by bequests, and as much celebrity as he desired. The sons of rich financiers found an easy entry into political life. Even the very loafers and vagabonds made a living out of politics by selling their votes in the electoral clubs or acting as clients and spies for the leaders of a political group. The Empire in fact supplied employment for every one. Officers of every political com-

* Suet., Cæs., 11.

plexion took service under popular or aristocratic generals. 65 B.C.
The chiefs of the two parties were both on equally friendly terms with the financiers; they used the same means to make themselves useful to the middle class, and sought popularity by the identical methods of bribery and largesse. The popular orators were always declaiming against the abuses of office. But this was only a matter of habit or calculation, and was seldom intended to be taken literally. Every one knew that these abuses were only a necessary corollary to the process of exploitation on which Italy was growing rich. The Democratic magistrates committed scandals every whit as shameless as those attributed to their Conservative colleagues.

The question of debt.

There was endless disputation and endless intrigue; yet behind all the rivalry of cliques and individuals there was but a single subject upon which the anxiety of thoughtful men was centred—the question of debt. Amid the general impatience for enjoyment and position, there were thousands who had become embarrassed by obligations which they were unable to discharge; and the imperial democracy that held a world beneath its sway, from the Senators who bore historic names down to the humble tillers of the soil, from Julius Cæsar down to the smallest shopkeeper in a back street at Rome, was at the mercy of a small group of usurers. This ruling gang of pay-masters consisted of all sorts and conditions of men, from eminent knights like Atticus down to miserly middle class tradesmen, or freedmen and the sons of freedmen of obscure origin and sordid habits, to whom the temptations of spending made no appeal. Many a time must an illustrious Senator, say Julius Cæsar himself, have opened his door to some bent and wrinkled old slave, carried to Rome from the East in his youth and then set free, who had taken up his abode in the metropolis and lived only for the hoarding of his treasure. The sky was already dark with signs of the approaching storm, when a leader suddenly stood forth to propound the all-absorbing question from which both parties shrank back equally affrighted.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW CÆSAR BECAME A DEMAGOGUE

Cæsar discredited—Pompey at Amisus—Re-organisation of Pontus—Pompey's wealth—Cicero and Catiline candidates for the Consulship in 63—Phases of the contest; success of Cicero and defeat of Catiline—Pompey invades and annexes Syria—Pompey and the Parthians—Scaurus and Gabinius in Judæa—The last dream of Mithridates—The Land Law—The political agitation and financial crisis in 64–3—Hatred of the Conservatives for Cæsar—The first Cæsar legend—His debts—His intrigues with the wives of the popular leaders—Cæsar and Pompey's wife—The trial of Rabirius—Cæsar Pontifex Maximus.

Cæsar discredited.

THE conspiracy of 66, the agitation for the conquest of Egypt, his bribery and indebtedness, and the suspicions aroused by his coalition with Crassus had all reacted unfavourably on Cæsar's reputation. He had alienated the support of many who had previously admired him and were disappointed to see him giving way to the temptations of political intrigue. The ideal of his youthful ambition had now lost its appeal. It was but only too manifest that the Aristotelian harmony between aristocracy and democracy was an impracticable dream. The well-to-do classes, preoccupied with their financial embarrassment and disgusted by a succession of futile or dangerous political agitations, were becoming indifferent or even Conservative in their political views: while the popular party was seeking its supporters deeper down amongst the dregs of the Roman population—amongst the bankrupt landlords and merchants of Italy and disappointed and desperate outcasts from all classes of society. There began to be talk of Land Laws, of the abolition of debt, of confiscating the plunder of the generals, and other revolutionary measures for the relief of the poor. As a reaction against this development, the small clique to which the great Conservative party seemed now to be reduced, professed sentiments of the utmost fury and contempt against their opponents: though it had no more hopeful

items in its own programme than the antiquated expedients of massacre, execution and *coups d'état*. 64 B.C.

Pompey's durbar at Amisus.

Cæsar must often, during this period, have cast envious eyes on Pompey, so happily removed from these troublesome agitations. Pompey was indeed being extraordinarily successful in the two schemes which had taken him to the East; he was increasing his power and he was amassing an immense fortune. By extracting huge sums from the Kings of the East, by large organised slave raids, by the sale of the poorer prisoners, and the ransoms of the rich,* he had already become as wealthy as Crassus. Part of his money he had immediately invested in the East, contracting loans at excessive rates of interest with small sovereigns who were in debt, such as Ariobarzanes the King of Cappadocia.† By this time, after years of unimpeded success, he had become a sort of King of Kings over the entire East with an authority such as no Roman had ever wielded before him. In the spring of 64 he gave a display of his power and magnificence at Amisus, where he had assembled a court of kings to distribute pardons and favours in the name of Rome. He gave new kings to Paphlagonia and Colchis, increased the dominion of the Tetrarchs of Galatia, appointed Archelaus, son of the defender of Athens, to be high priest of Comana, and divided the territory of Pontus between eleven towns, where, under the supervision of the Roman Governor, he set up the Republican constitution of a pure Greek πόλις.‡ Like all educated Italians of his day, Pompey regarded Republican institutions of the Græco-Italian type as the best of all possible governments, and eagerly re-established it among the Greek populations freed by Roman arms from the yoke of Oriental autocracy. Not content with having successfully concluded the task undertaken by Lucullus, he was about to seek fresh laurels in the kingdoms of Parthia or Syria. He had not yet made up his mind which of the two to invade, but, after the fall of Pontus, one or the other was a predestined victim. Having now completed his reorganisation of the East, Pompey was naturally anxious to put the crown to an achievement in which no rival could share his glory. He had wealth, power, renown, everything in fact that his heart could desire.

The Consular election for 63.

Cæsar, on the other hand, needed to perform prodigies of ingenuity to avoid capsizing, as he navigated his small craft among the democratic rapids. In the early months of the

* Dion, xxxvii. 20. † Cic., A., vi. 1, 3.
‡ App., Mithr., 114; Reinach, M. E., 400; Mommsen, R. G., iii. 153.

64 B.C. year 64, Crassus had revived his old project of securing the election of two Consuls pledged to favour his designs; and, of course, it was once more Cæsar who was to play the most hazardous part in the enterprise. There were seven candidates for the Consulship of 63. They were Publius Sulpicius Galba and Caius Licinius Sacerdos, two honest but not particularly influential nobles; Caius Antonius Hybrida, who had held command under Sulla and been accused of extortion by Cæsar in 77, and who now came before the electors burdened with debt and with all his possessions mortgaged; Quintus Cornificius and Lucius Cassius Longinus, who were out of the running, and finally Cicero and Catiline.* Catiline was a man of great ability, but exceedingly unscrupulous in his ambitions and violent in his methods, who had been attracted to the popular party by the intrigue of which he had been the victim in 65.

Cicero adopted by the Conservatives.

A contest between so miscellaneous a selection of candidates at so critical a moment was foredoomed to be intricate and full of surprises. Cicero at first lost heart on seeing that the Conservatives preferred the claims of the two nobles to those of an interloper like himself, who was compromised by relations with the popular party; and he had serious thoughts of joining forces with Catiline, with whom he was personally acquainted, although he was in no way his friend.† But Crassus and Cæsar were too quick for him. Catiline, with his unsleeping energy and bitterness against the Conservatives, and Antonius, who was too unprincipled and too penurious to reject a golden opportunity, were exactly the instruments that they needed. They therefore made terms with these two and prepared to lend them vigorous support as the Democratic candidates for the Consulship. It looked as if Cicero, who had reached his other offices by the unanimous consent of all parties, would, for once, be unanimously rejected. But the Conservatives were so alarmed by the prospect of two Consuls pledged to Crassus' designs, that in order to have a serious candidate to set against Catiline, they offered their support to the parvenu. Abandoned

* Ascon., in Cic., Tog. Cand.

† I put aside altogether, as improbable, all that Sallust says about Catiline's second candidature, which he considers an essential part of the second conspiracy. My reasons are those cleverly given by John, E. G. C. V., 738 f. See also Tarentino, C. C., 39 f. It seems to me proved beyond question that there was as yet no conspiracy, and that Crassus' support of Catiline's candidature arose out of his desire to realise his Egyptian design.

by his own party, Cicero, who had for some time been growing disgusted with the excesses of the Democrats, readily consented to become the candidate of the Conservatives, without realising the dangers which, in a system of party government, threaten an honest politician who suddenly changes his party allegiance. 64 B.C.

Both parties now put forth all their strength. Catiline spent a great deal of his own and a great deal more of Crassus' money; Cæsar used his utmost efforts to help Catiline and the ex-general of Sulla whom he had accused thirteen years before; and Crassus mobilised his army of clients, freedmen and defaulting tenants. For once the public was thoroughly excited, and the elections passed off in the midst of a huge agitation. The result bore witness to the perplexity of the voters. Neither of the two parties was triumphant, but neither was entirely defeated. Catiline, the most dangerous of the popular candidates, was beaten, but Antonius was successful, with Cicero for his colleague. But in any case Crassus had once more been checkmated; for it was of no use to him to have only one of the Consuls on his side, particularly as that one was the less capable of his two nominees. **Cicero and Antonius elected.**

After this excitement a brief truce intervened, and public attention was again directed upon Pompey, who had at last made up his mind for the invasion of Syria. The majority of his staff had strongly urged him to carry out the old designs of Lucullus upon Parthia. Perhaps Pompey, who was less of a genius but a wiser man than Lucullus, had some inkling that the task of conquering the Parthian Empire was beyond his strength, and beyond the strength of Rome. If so, it is a remarkable proof of his penetration. But there are several small facts which indicate that he had not as yet, in 64, so clear a vision of the real conditions, and that he continued to hesitate between his dislike of leaving the glory of over-running Parthia to another and his fear of risking his life in an over-hazardous adventure. This, at any rate, seems the best explanation of his curious military dispositions. He divided his army into two bodies, one of which was to enter Syria under his orders by the safe route through Cilicia, while the other, under the command of Lucius Afranius, was to occupy Gordiene and then to meet him in Syria, after passing through Mesopotamia, which was a province of the Parthian Empire.* This violation of Parthian territory was a deliberate provocation, and it was no doubt intended as a concession to the party which demanded **Pompey and the Parthians.**

* Dion, xxxvii. 5, 6.

64 B.C. war with Parthia. Unwilling to declare war openly, Pompey contented himself with making a military demonstration to show the peoples of the East that he had no fear of Parthia and would not shrink in case of need from undertaking a campaign. These were still the aggressive tactics of Lucullus; but they had degenerated by passing into feeble hands. Pompey no longer struck quick and boldly like his master; he preferred a more cautious game of fence and parry.

Pompey annexes Syria.

Despite its ingenuity, this strategy proved unsuccessful. Afranius was very nearly lost with the whole of his army in Mesopotamia,* which he rashly invaded without trustworthy guides or accurate knowledge or adequate preparation. But Pompey, who had been clever enough to reserve the easier part of the enterprise for himself, accomplished his task without risk or hardship. The old kingdom of the Seleucids, once a great and conquering power, was now broken up into a large number of rival principalities, no single one of which had the courage or the forces to resist the Roman invader.† Pompey had only to show his face to be recognised as master. He sent troops into Phœnicia and Cœlesyria to occupy Damascus, under the command of Aulus Gabinius and Marcus Æmilius Scaurus, son of that Marcus Æmilius Scaurus who, himself son of a coal-merchant, had become *Princeps Senatus*. Then he proceeded to make a distribution of kingdoms and territories. He gave Commagene to Antiochus, whom Lucullus had already made King of Syria,‡ declared Seleucia a free city, and promised protection to Antioch in return for a large sum which it had paid him.§ He showed generosity towards the King of Osroene and the Chief of the Ituræan Arabs.‖ Finally, under the pretext that the national dynasty was extinct, he declared Syria a Roman province with the obligation of paying a tribute of one-twentieth of its revenues. Pompey had thus, like Lucullus, added immense new provinces to the Roman Empire.

Phraates and Tigranes.

Meanwhile new troubles had broken out in his rear. Provoked by the march of Afranius, yet not daring to attack Pompey himself, King Phraates had declared war upon the King of Armenia. Tigranes sent to Pompey for aid. Many of his

* Dion, xxxvii., 5.

† For the history of the Seleucid Kingdom see *The House of Seleucus*, by E. R. Bevan, London, 1902. These years are dealt with in vol. ii. chap. 31.

‡ Strabo, xvi. 749; App., Mithr., 114.

§ Strabo, xvi. 751; Eutrop., vi. 14; Porphyr., Tyr., in F. H. G., iii., p. 716, fr. 26.

‖ Drümann, G. R., iv. 454.

officers again urged Pompey to invade Parthia and incorporate it in the Empire. But if the march of Afranius had caused alarm to Phraates, his narrow escape had made a very lively impression upon Pompey. Rejecting the foolhardy counsels of his officers he decided to adopt a more reasonable attitude towards the King of Parthia and to curb his own ambitions. He contented himself with despatching three commissioners to decide the question which had risen between the two Kings.* Meanwhile Scaurus and Gabinius had found a perfect goldmine in Judæa, where a Civil War was raging between two members of the royal family of the Asmonæans, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus. Both had sent appeals to the Roman generals to ask for their assistance. It was granted to Aristobulus on payment of nearly two millions to Scaurus and nearly a million and a half to Gabinius.† 64 B.C.

The last dream of Mithridates.

While conquest thus succeeded conquest in some of the richest regions of the world, no one suspected that at three score and ten and in the depths of the Crimea, Mithridates still dreamt of renewing the enterprise of Hannibal. He had spent the whole of the year 64 in recruiting a small army. His plan of campaign showed all or more than all his old audacity. He intended to march along the north coast of the Black Sea, attracting the Sarmatians and Bastarnæ to his standard as he passed, thence up the valley of the Danube, where the Celts would join him; then, crossing Pannonia, he would hurl himself at the head of a powerful army into the plain of Italy.‡ What induced him to adopt this extraordinary plan? It is just possible that he may have kept himself informed from the Crimea of the situation in Italy or that he hoped to rekindle the social war by inflaming the passions of the two parties at Rome. We shall probably be safer in attributing his scheme to the ambition or monomania of a veteran campaigner who refused to submit to his destiny. We are not in a position to decide. But this much is certain. If Mithridates had been in constant communication with Italy, he could only have been inspired with a fresh energy for his project.

[Croatia and Carniola.]

Rumours of a Land Bill.

Meanwhile the Italians were as unconscious as Pompey and his Syrian army of this storm cloud in the North. All eyes were now turned upon the wild and confused social conflict which was being fought out under the shadow of the Capitol.

* Dion, xxxvii. 6, 7; App., Mithr., 106.
† Joseph., A. J., xiv. 2, 3; 3, 2.
‡ App., Mithr., 109; Dion, xxxvii. 11; Plut., Pomp., 41.

64 B.C. The truce which followed the elections did not last for long. It was probably during November that a report began to circulate through Rome which produced lively excitement in all classes. The Tribunes of the people were said to be preparing a Land Bill.* The rumour was significant. Since Sulla's Dictatorship, no one at Rome had even ventured to mention the name of a Land Bill. The popular party must be very confident of its strength to be rekindling a brand that had already so often been snatched from its grasp. Soon afterwards men saw the Tribunes, and more especially the projected proposer of the Bill, a certain Publius Rullus, adopting strange disguises, appearing in public with dishevelled hair and unshorn beard, and dressed in rags.† This masquerading was a still more ominous symptom. The measure must be revolutionary indeed if the Tribunes began courting the worst section of the electorate by adopting its dress. But great as was the excitement among the Conservatives, it was nothing to that felt by Cicero.

Cicero as a non-party politician.

Cicero was not a man of action.‡ He was untouched by the two great passions, love of money and love of power, which drive men to face the perils of great social conflicts. He was an artist of the first rank, an incomparable writer, a man of delicate sensibility, lively imagination and strong and subtle intellect, whose supreme ambition was not to amass wealth or to exercise authority over his equals, but to win admiration. Apart from these great intellectual qualities and this characteristic ambition, he reproduced the distinctive traits which centuries of submission had imprinted on the Italian middle class from which he sprung. He had the same frugal and cautious habits, the same almost morbid disdain for luxury, combined with great strictness in private life, strong family affections, and a somewhat exaggerated respect for aristocracy and wealth. The public life of his time, with its violence and its unrealities, its bitterness and its treachery, with the cynical opportunism and frivolous ostentation of its leading men, and the avowed self-interest and unscrupulousness of its parties, offended against all his deeper instincts. So well, indeed, had he realised this himself that he had hitherto been quite satisfied to remain the greatest orator and lawyer in Rome, and had only sought public office because he had obtained it unopposed.

Thus Cicero had calculated upon his Consulship as a pleasant

* Cic., in Leg. Agr., ii. v,, 11. † *Id.*, 13.
‡ Boissier, *Ciceron et ses amis*, p. 38.

continuation of this tranquil career and as a graceful recognition of his eminent services to literature. If he had accepted the support of the Conservatives, he had not in the least desired to compromise his popularity with the people. He wished to preserve, even as Consul, his privileged place in public life as a statesman above party. Unfortunately the impending Land Bill involved a policy of this sort in a serious dilemma. However conciliatory his attitude, it would scarcely be possible to please all parties. Confident in his prestige, Cicero was at least prepared to try. He visited the Tribunes and told them that he too was desirous of doing something useful for the people and that they might very well work in common. To his unfeigned surprise, his advances were by no means welcomed. The Tribunes, not without a certain pointed irony, refused to give him any information about the projected Bill and declared that they had no need of his services.* After this rebuff, Cicero was forced to wait for the details of the Bill until, towards the end of December, Rullus read it out to the people. The law was more complicated and revolutionary than its predecessors upon similar lines, and contained many clauses whose obscure terminology was very alarming to the Conservatives and the wealthy classes. It instituted a sort of economic Dictatorship of ten commissioners chosen by the seventeen tribes for five years with full powers, and exempt from the Tribunician Veto. These commissioners had power to sell, both in and outside Italy, all property that had fallen in to the State in and after the year 88, together with all property whose sale had been discussed in the Senate since the year 81. They had also power to make an inventory of the booty of all generals with the exception of Pompey, to force them to give back what they had taken, and with the money accruing from these sales and from the spoils of the generals, to buy land in Italy to distribute among the poor.†

63 B.C.

Cicero rebuffed by the Tribunes.

Cicero guessed at once, and rightly, that Rullus was acting in the interests of Crassus and Cæsar.‡ It is quite impossible that at a time when Crassus and Cæsar were controlling the policy of the popular party, an obscure Tribune should have been bold enough to propose so revolutionary a law without the secret support of his chiefs. Moreover it is difficult to see what aim the Tribune could have had in proposing such

Aims of Crassus and Cæsar.

* Cic., Leg. Agr., ii. v.
† Drümann, G. R., iii. 148-9.
‡ *Cf.* Cic., Leg. Agr., i. i,, 1 ; i. v,, 16 ; ii. xvii,, 44 ; ii. xvii,, 46.

63 B.C. a law upon his own initiative. It is probable that Crassus and Cæsar were pursuing a double end. They were endeavouring at once to rob Cicero of his popularity and to raise anew, under a different form, the great question of Egypt.* Once elected commissioners, Cæsar and Crassus would be able to declare that amongst the property that had fallen into the State since the year 88 were the possessions of the Ptolemies, which had been bequeathed with the kingdom of Egypt by Alexander II. in 81; by making use of the enormous powers of corruption that the Land Law placed in their hands they could then make war upon Egypt to recover them. They might expect the people at last to conjure up some enthusiasm for the annexation of Egypt, when it knew that the profits to be derived from it would be used for buying up land.

The Conservatives and the Land Law.

Once this is explained, it is easy to understand why Crassus and Cæsar had the Bill proposed by a Tribune instead of openly coming forward as its promotors. A Bill so revolutionary in its scope wounded too many susceptibilities and alarmed too many interests. The Conservatives saw in the new commissioners a sort of disguised Dictatorship of the Democratic chiefs. It was resented by the generals who had amassed large fortunes in the recent wars, by the tax-farmers who had leased public lands in Bithynia and Pontus, the sale of which would come under discussion, by all those, in short, who had profited most from the conquests of Lucullus and Pompey, and who were now to be despoiled for the benefit of the distressed proletariat. The result of the conflict which was inevitable before such a law could be approved must have appeared so dubious that neither Crassus nor Cæsar were willing to set their reputation and prospects at stake. Indeed the Conservatives and the wealthy classes took up the struggle with enthusiasm. They began by exaggerating the revolutionary aspect of the law. They declared that it would entail a general liquidation of the State property, because the commissioners would include in it the public estates in Greece and Asia, on the pretext that these provinces had been reconquered by Sulla after 88.† Attempts were made to frighten all who had bought the goods of persons proscribed by Sulla by persuading them that the law would be enforced against their property. Some colour was lent to this assertion by a proposal of Rullus to annul the civic penalties pronounced by Sulla against the

* Cicero says so outright. Leg. Agr., i. i., 1; ii. xvi., 41; ii. xvii., 44.
† Cic., in Leg. Agr., i. ii., 5; ii. xv., 39.

sons of the proscribed.* In spite of his desire to stand well with all parties, Cicero was thus forced by circumstances to defend the interests of his friends the knights and the cause of Conservatism. 63 B.C.

The "De lege Agraria."

This was the first great encounter of his Consulship, and he emerged with flying colours. Cæsar and Crassus were profoundly mistaken in thinking that a bill of so serious and revolutionary a character had any chance of being proposed with success by an obscure and incapable Tribune—a man of straw who had neither the prestige nor the ability to counteract such a combination of interests. Nobles, knights and generals, all prospective victims of the law, joined vigorously in the campaign, and the Tribunes were unable either to baffle their intrigues or to stir the unruffled composure of the people. By their reluctance to throw themselves openly into the struggle Cæsar and Crassus had done no more than provide the Consul with a magnificent opening for his gifts. Cicero secured the rejection of the Bill at the Assembly by the delivery of two orations, pitched in his most democratic key, in which he declared that his ambition was to be a great popular Consul,† and gave himself out as a sincere admirer of the Gracchi and the old Land Laws, which had been truly designed for the good of the people. He declared that he opposed the measure of Rullus because it was contrary to the popular interest and injured rather than assisted the prosperity of the poorer classes.‡

The Tribunes continue the agitation.

Cæsar and Crassus thus had once more received a check. Decidedly their democratic propaganda was not prospering as it should. But they were far from being ready to acknowledge defeat; there were other questions to be raised which might yet serve to inflame the passions of the people and cause Cicero greater embarrassment to dismiss. One after the other the Tribunes of the people introduced revolutionary proposals. One Tribune demanded nothing less than the abolition of all debts; another desired that the penalties pronounced against Publius Autronius and Publius Sulla, the conspirators of 66,§ should be revoked. Yet all these attempts seemed somehow to miss fire. No one was prepared to take this sort of proposal seriously and the appeals of the Tribunes fell upon deaf ears.

Yet Cæsar and Crassus had not entirely misjudged the situation. These feints and manœuvres, if they effected

* Cic., in Leg. Agr., ii. iv., 10. † *Id.*, ii. iv., 9.
‡ *Id.*, iv. 10.
§ Dion, xxxvii. 25; Lange, R. A., iii. 230.

63 B.C. nothing else, increased the exasperation of the Conservatives and the general feeling of insecurity among all classes in the community.* The capitalists grew uneasy and hesitated to make investments. Money, scarce enough at ordinary times, became dearer and dearer. Many debtors found themselves in the gravest embarrassment. According to the severe regulations which were then in use regarding mortgage, if the debtor was unable punctually to meet his obligations, the creditor was entitled to take possession of the property mortgaged, even if it were two or three times the value of the amount lent. Many people who were unable to raise the money necessary to pay off their interest or reimburse the capital they had borrowed, were forced to part at ridiculous prices, with their lands, their houses, their jewels, or their works of art. There was a rapid fall in prices throughout the market, from which all classes suffered in varying degrees. Among those who felt it most were the rich Senators who were no longer able to raise the large sums necessary for the complicated administration of their huge hereditary estates.†

The financial depression.

Cæsar as a scapegoat.

All this led to the outbreak of a lively agitation, not only among the politicians of the Conservative party, but among the whole of the wealthy class. The responsibility for the depression was thought to rest with the Tribunes and their masters; but, if Crassus was shielded by his wealth, his influence and the awe with which he inspired his creditors, no such consideration was felt for the unhappy Cæsar. Cæsar was poor, he was unpopular, and he was deeply in debt. Moreover he had no powerful relatives to stand by him. It is probable that the aristocratic connections that he had made by his marriage were by now gradually falling away from his side. As to the members of his own family, they continued to ally their fortunes with parvenus in hopes of recovering some of the money wasted by Cæsar's extravagance. It was probably with this object that one of his nieces had lately married a certain Caius Octavius, the wealthy son of a usurer at Velletri, who was using his father's fortune to make friends in Roman society and to pave the way for a political career. It was therefore simple enough to spare Crassus and reserve all the stripes for Cæsar. This convenient and satisfactory

* Cic., in Leg. Agr., i. viii., 23; ii. iii., 8.

† For this financial crisis see Val. Max., iv. 8, 3. Though it came to a head a year later, at the time of the conspiracy of Catiline, it must have begun earlier.

operation was so frequently performed as to give rise to the very natural question: was not Cæsar actually paid by Crassus to bare his back for a double share of the whippings? 63 B.C.

It is probably this year that marks the invention of the first Cæsar legend, the story in which, by no very exaggerated process of distortion, Cæsar appears as the representative of all the vices of the modern mercantile epoch, the symbol of all that most shocked the old Latin conscience in the "new manners." No doubt he was in debt: but Conservative gossip made his liabilities mount up to fabulous figures: men talked of millions.* Again, Cæsar had of course, realised what enormous power was dispensed by the women of his day in the family circle,† and he had certainly tried to make friends with the wives of Crassus, Pompey, Gabinius, and the other popular chiefs; he was a frequent guest, for instance, at the house of Servilia, the widow of the Marcus Junius Brutus who perished in the Revolution of 78, and sister of Cato, a clever and influential woman who had found a second husband in Decimus Julius Silanus. None of these women, with the exception of Pompey's wife, Mucia, appear to have been his mistress.‡ Yet, in Conservative gossip, the legend of Cæsar's amours soon took its place beside the legend of his debts, and he was accused of carrying on intrigues simultaneously with Servilia and with the wives of Pompey, Crassus, and Gabinius, in short with the wives of all the leaders of the popular party. His relations with Mucia were the subject of particularly biting sarcasms. It was now clear as daylight why Cæsar had been so enthusiastic in his support of the Gabinian and Manilian laws. All that he wanted was to despatch on a distant mission the husband of the fair but fickle Mucia. Cæsar had in fact become for the Conservatives the incarnation of all the new abominations of the time: the young libertine who gains his ends through women, the unscrupulous bankrupt, whose debts drive him into crime, the adventurer who to satisfy his greed

The first Cæsar legend.

* Plut., Cæs., 5, says that according to common talk, Cæsar contracted 1300 talents of debt before the beginning of his political career. The figures are so high that it is impossible to believe them. Moreover, Plutarch offers no guarantee of their truth. They belong to the legendary figures invented by the Conservatives.

† Ciccotti, P. V., 20 f.

‡ Suet., Cæs., 50. It is to these years, before his departure for Gaul, that the story of these intrigues must refer. But four at a time seem rather an excessive number, even for Cæsar. Nevertheless, for reasons which will be given later, it is probable that he was the lover of the wife of Pompey.

63 B.C. and ambition is prepared to go the length of overturning the commonwealth. Yet legend may sometimes assume the importance of history; and the absurd exaggerations of his enemies were gradually to drive Cæsar to transform some of these imaginary vices into the real revolutionary forces of his age.

Cæsar's danger.

These attacks put Cæsar on his mettle. He was indeed in a position of real danger. If the agitation were to provoke the outbreak of disorders and the Senate were prevailed upon to decree a state of siege, he might easily perish like the Gracchi and Saturninus. The contemplation of the fate that had befallen his forerunners in the party could not help causing their natural successor, both in policy and popularity, the liveliest disquiet. Cæsar with his energy, his quickness of apprehension and his extraordinary lucidity of judgment, at once saw the line of safety. His best defence was to startle his opponents by some stroke of propagandist daring. But to do this successfully he must shift his ground. He must abandon the field of economic reform and Land legislation for a more purely political issue. This would not only be less dangerous in itself, but it would give far greater scope for a genuine popular agitation: it was never difficult to stir the jealous and ignorant proletariat against their masters the aristocrats.

The prosecution of Rabirius.

He succeeded in trumping up a political question of a very curious kind. In an obscure corner of Rome there lived an old Senator named Caius Rabirius, who was said to have killed with his own hand a Tribune of the people, thirty-seven years before, at the time of the riots of Saturninus. Of course there was no one who still remembered the details. Cæsar hunted him out and suddenly had him accused of *perduellio* by a certain Titus Atius Labienus, a newcomer in politics, who was one of his adherents and was at that time Tribune of the people. He then secured that the Prætor, also an accomplice, should send the case before two judges, of whom he himself would be one. Rabirius was of course declared guilty;* and the penalty for *perduellio* was death. The Conservatives were stirred to action, quite as much by Cæsar's unheard of audacity

* The historians (Drümann, G. R., iii. 162; Mommsen, R. G., iii. 169), have not detected the relation between this prosecution, the disorders of the time, and the critical position of Cæsar at this moment. They are wrong in considering the trial simply as an attempt on Cæsar's part to make the Conservatives respect the existing laws with regard to political offences.

as by anxiety for the fate of the unfortunate old Senator. 63 B.C.
Rabirius appealed to the people, and Cicero readily undertook his defence. In tones of impassioned eloquence he told the people that the object aimed at in the agitation was not the head of the unhappy Rabirius, but the weakening of all ties that held together the established order, so as to pave the way more easily for a complete overthrow of the State.* But the people, who had remained cold over the Land Law, were now thoroughly in earnest; the memories of the great revolution had stirred their blood, and Rabirius would certainly have been condemned if a Prætor had not hit upon an ingenious excuse for dissolving the assembly.† Cæsar, who was not thirsting for the life-blood of Rabirius, let the old man go in peace. His object had been fully attained. He had cooled the enthusiasm that the Conservatives had been displaying for a state of siege and "short work with the demagogues," and he had shown them how easy it was, even after a lapse of thirty-seven years, to excite the anger of the people against the mere suggestion of Sullan methods.

The Pro Rabirio.

About this time the post of Pontifex Maximus became vacant through the death of Metellus Pius. It was a lifelong office, the holder of which had the supreme direction of the official religion and the privilege of living in a public residence. The right of electing the Pontifex had been taken away from the people by Sulla and restored to the College of Pontiffs. Cæsar, whose daring seemed to keep pace with his danger, conceived the idea of re-introducing, by a law which Labienus was to propose, the popular election of the Pontifex Maximus and of coming forward himself as candidate. If he succeeded in becoming the head of the established religion, a Consul would scarcely dare to make away with him in a massacre on the proclamation of a state of siege. There were several distinguished personages, amongst others Catulus and Publius Servilius Isauricus, standing for the office. These eminent persons thought it an excellent jest when they heard that a man under forty, a bankrupt atheist, mixed up with all the vulgarest demagogues in Rome, and a devotee of the astronomy of Hipparchus, was a candidate with them for so blamelessly Conservative a post. Catulus even ventured to insult Cæsar

Cæsar made Pontifex Maximus.

* Cic., Pro Rab. Perd., ii. 4; xii. 23.

† He struck the flag on the Janiculum, which was the signal in early Roman times of an attack of the Etruscans, and involved the suspension of all public business.

63 B.C. by offering him money for the abandonment of his candidature.* The suggestion that he was no more than a common hireling touched Cæsar to the quick. He threw himself into the conflict with the impetuosity of a man who feels that his whole career is at stake, and assisted by the substantial advances of Crassus and by his skill in all the arts of political seduction, fought his campaign so successfully, that the mode of election was changed, and he was finally elected Pontifex Maximus.†

* Plut., Cæs., 7. † Vell., ii. 43; Dion, xxxvii. 37.

CHAPTER XV

CATILINE

Death of Mithridates—The elections for 62—Second candidature of Catiline—His election programme; the abolition of debt—Success of the programme and dismay of the upper classes—Panic among financiers and politicians at Rome—Alliance between Conservatives and capitalists—Cicero the Conservative leader—The intrigues and scandals of the electoral struggle—The last expedient of the Conservatives—Defeat of Catiline—Beginning of the conspiracy—Intrigues to secure the proclamation of a state of siege—Denunciations by Crassus—Catiline's last attempts at Rome—His departure—The conspiracy at Rome—Negotiations with the Allobroges—Arrest of the conspirators—The 3rd, 4th, and 5th of December 63. The trial and punishment of the conspirators—Attitude of Italy towards the conspiracy—Close of the revolutionary era.

Triumph of Lucullus.

THE Conservatives found some slight consolation for these rebuffs in a small success. They at length succeeded in passing a decree for the triumph of Lucullus. The pro-Consul was allowed to enter Rome at the head of his soldiers. But in spite of the hundred thousand barrels of wine which he distributed among the people to celebrate the occasion,* it was a frigid and cheerless ceremony. One would have thought that it was only some obscure commander returning from a paltry expedition against barbarians and not the teacher of the new imperialism now so much in vogue, and the originator of the conquests and the glories of Pompey. But Lucullus cared little for the noise of notoriety. After ten years in the East he re-entered his father's house disgusted with mankind, deaf to the plaudits of the masses, and prepared to find a congenial reward for his achievements in the enjoyment of his riches and the respectful admiration of his peers. But worse awaited him at home. He discovered that Clodia, the wife he had married without a dowry, had committed incest with

* Pliny, N. H., xiv. 14, 96.

63 B.C. her brother Publius Clodius, the man who had suborned his legions.* He cast her forth in horror.

Death of Mithridates. In the spring of this same year a petty revolution rid the fortunate Pompey of Mithridates. His son Pharnaces, his own soldiers and the people of the Crimea, alarmed by his project for the invasion of Italy, turned against the heroic old monarch and forced him to commit suicide.

Genius against organisation. Thus ended a man who to the ability, the energy and the daring of a self-made adventurer united the unmeasured pride and the unchallenged egoism of an Eastern potentate, for whom personal success is the supreme law of the world. Like Hannibal before him, he had risked his life on a single-handed struggle against Rome and Italy. But once again the single fighter, powerful though he was, and in spite of the encouragement of opening successes, retired broken and exhausted before the forces of a system. As Hannibal had failed to beat down the Roman aristocracy strengthened by centuries of national life, so Mithridates had failed to beat down the young and vigorous Italian people. In vain had he conceived the audacious project of destroying his enemy by kindling all round her, throughout the Mediterranean and in Italy itself, the most extensive and devastating outburst of revolution that the ancient world had ever seen. The son of the man who had dreamed of being the Emperor of the East was content to accept, as a gift from the conqueror, the petty principality of the Crimea. Genius had once more to succumb before organisation, before the concerted action of those manifold political and military forces in which, despite the shock and havoc of crisis after crisis, Italy was still so powerful. We need not lament his fate. If the Italian democracy was often unprincipled and lawless, the unbridled absolutism of Pontus with its mercenary bureaucracy was far more consistently and consciously perverse. No other reason indeed is adequate to explain the sudden collapse of this powerful and extensive Græco-Asiatic Empire. It was already undermined when the Romans attacked it by the corruption of its officials, the decadence of its dynasty, the self-indulgent civilisation of the Hellenised East, and all the attractive and insidious depravities which were only just beginning to infect and enfeeble the more old-fashioned morality of the Italian people.

The news of Mithridates' death was received at Rome with clamorous rejoicings. It formed a new title of glory for

* Cic., Pro Mil., xxvii. 73; Plut., Cic., 29.

Pompey, to whom the popular party gave credit for every success in those regions. Cæsar who was anxious to be on good terms with Pompey, hastened to urge the people to decree the most solemn honours in his favour.* Then the reports from the East again began to grow monotonous. Pompey was traversing Phœnicia and Cœlesyria, taking ransom from the petty chieftains.† He had met with no resistance except from a small town called Jerusalem amongst a petty nation with whom the Romans had since the year 139‡ been on amicable terms. But the difficulty which faced Pompey here was a mere trifle. The two monarchs of the Jews, who were engaged in fighting one another and from whom Scaurus and Gabinius had already extracted their pile of treasures, had now had recourse to Pompey. After some hesitation, and on the promise of a substantial sum, Pompey had decided to come to the assistance of Aristobulus; but when Gabinius came to Jerusalem to fetch the money, a popular outbreak compelled him to fly, and Pompey had been forced to lay siege to the city.§ 63 B.C. **Pompey and the Jews.**

The public had no time to pay attention to this little war, for the political struggle in Italy was now growing greatly in violence. The year 63 was to be a year of Conservative panics. Already in the spring they witnessed the arrival in Rome of a prospective candidate for the Tribuneship in Quintus Metellus Nepos, brother-in-law of Pompey, and one of his generals.|| This Metellus was son of the Consul of 98, nephew of the conqueror of the Balearic Islands, and great-nephew of Metellus Macedonicus.¶ He thus belonged to one of the greatest families in Rome, but like many other members of the aristocracy he had followed Pompey on to the popular side, in the hope of hastening his promotion and filling his coffers. The numerous escort of slaves and baggage animals which came home with him showed that his second object at least had been successfully achieved. **Metellus and the Tribuneship.**

The arrival of Metellus produced a great sensation among the Conservatives. It was generally thought that he was pursuing his candidature in concert with Pompey, and that Pompey must therefore have some special object in view. Men anxiously enquired what this object might be. So great was the **Cato stands for the Tribuneship.**

* Lange, R. A., iii. 256. † Joseph., A. J., xiv. 3, 2.
‡ Castelli, *Gli Ebrei.*, p. 280.
§ Joseph., A. J., xiv. 3, 4. Castelli, p. 280.
|| Plut., Cat., v. 20. ¶ Drümann, G. R., ii. 16, 29, f.

63 B.C. disquietude that it was decided to put forward a Conservative candidate for the Tribuneship, a thing which had not been done for years. But what Conservative was ready to face the risks of an almost desperate contest? Among the Conservatives as among the Democrats, there was no great store of earnest and honourable partisans. In default of a better candidate it was decided to fall back on a man for whom the Conservatives entertained a distrust not unmixed with ridicule—on Cato, that isolated and whimsical figure whom we have already seen protesting against the fashionable elegance of his contemporaries. He was a man of narrow views but unswerving consistency, upright, virtuous, inflexible, without fear and without reproach, an enemy of compromise on any question and with any person. It was only his supreme contempt for his opponents that could have induced this most obscurantist of Conservatives to attempt the incongruous enterprise of standing just now for so popular an office as the Tribuneship. But the danger from Metellus was pressing, and Cæsar too had just announced his candidature for the Prætorship. Here were two great reasons for alarm; and a third soon came to reinforce them.

Catiline's election programme.

Catiline was once more standing as candidate for the Consulship, and garnishing his *menu* to meet the public taste. He promised, if elected, to propose a measure dispensing all debtors from paying their creditors.* It cannot be denied that this savoured somewhat of revolution: yet it is mistaken to regard it as a deliberate preparation for what afterwards developed into the famous conspiracy. Catiline was still simply trying to court popularity by a proposal which, detestable though it appeared to capitalists and creditors, was far from displeasing to the majority of citizens, a proposal which, however violent and catagorical in form, was not very different from that of a Socialist member to-day who should promise his electors to reduce the interest on the national debt to 2 per cent., or from that of Mr. Bryan when he stood for the Presidency of the United States with the programme that debts contracted in gold should be paid in silver. The reduction and abolition of debt had been frequent incidents in the history of Greece, which was being so closely studied at Rome at this time. Nor was it unknown even in the Roman annals, from the very

* It is clear that this was his programme from Sall., Cat., 16 and 33; Cic., in Cat., ii. viii.-x.; *Id.*, F. v. 6, 2. See John, E. G. C. V., 739 f.

earliest times down to the last attempt in 86. Moreover it is an expedient to which all nations tend periodically to recur when they find themselves staggering beneath the weight of their obligations. Catiline was in fact merely following up the Democratic propaganda of Crassus and Cæsar by the selection of a project no more revolutionary, but simpler and more definite, than the Land Bill of Rullus. This time there would be no misunderstanding among the electorate. The plain offer to relieve them from their debts could not fail to rouse them. 63 B.C.

His relations with Cæsar and Crassus.

It is highly probable, though there is no evidence for the supposition, that Catiline first endeavoured to act in concert with Cæsar and Crassus, but failed to arrive at a satisfactory agreement. No reasons are preserved to us for his ill-success. It may be that Crassus and Cæsar, disillusioned by the fate of the Land Bill, despaired of attaining their objects by so dangerous a means. Both were revolutionaries of a very cautious and tentative order, and unwilling to be compromised with the demagogues of the gutter. It must never be forgotten that Crassus was one of the greatest creditors in Rome. It is likely enough that, placed in the dilemma of risking either the loss of his money or the failure of his pet project, he made up his mind to postpone Egypt once more.*

Catiline's new party.

Catiline was forced to proceed by himself. He threw himself into the battle with the energy of despair, resolved, if necessary to expend the whole of his fortune. The experiment of launching his revolutionary propaganda into a society already seething with discontent was instantaneously successful. His proposal so exactly harmonised with the secret desires of a large section of the population that their author leapt at once into unexpected popularity. He found ardent and enthusiastic supporters in the most diverse quarters—amongst the dissipated youth and the decadent aristocracy of Rome, among the poor in all parts of Italy, and even among the middle class of well-to-do proprietors, whom the passion for speculation had driven deep into debt.† Where Rullus had only ruffled the surface, Catiline moved society to the depths. It was not long before he had gathered round him a band of devoted partisans at Rome and in many of the towns of Italy: old

* John, E. G. C. V., p. 739 f., and Tarentino, C. C., 72, n. 2, have shown that Cæsar and Crassus took no part in the agitation still less in the conspiracy of Catiline.

† See the important passage in Cic., Cat., ii. viii,, 18. Also Sall., Cat., 16–17; Cic., Pro. Cael., v. 11.

63 B.C. soldiers and settlers of Sulla's army, like Caius Manlius from Fiesole, inglorious prodigals from the middle classes, well-to-do [Fæsulæ.] landlords from small country towns,* needy nobles like Publius Lentulus Sura, Caius Cethegus, Publius Sulla, Marcus Portius Læca and Sempronia, an extravagant and fashionable lady in the best society, the wife of Decimus Brutus, the Consul of 77†—in short a whole company of light-headed adventurers, who set themselves to the task of expropriating the rich as though it were the easiest thing in the world, to be carried through in peace and comfort by the constitutional method of legislation, approved by the majority of the electors.

The new coalition: "consensus ordinum." This pleasant illusion was soon to be dispelled. The danger of an abolition of debt seemed so stupendous that it grouped together in a coalition two bodies of men who had for the last half century regarded one another with distrust and contempt. It provoked an alliance between the knights and the respectable aristocrats, who still clung to the wealth and the traditions of older days. The capitalists had at first regarded the whole movement with contempt. But when they saw how it gained ground with the people, they began to feel uncomfortable. Before long discomfort had developed into anxiety, anxiety into dismay and even into panic. The whole political situation thus underwent a complete and sudden transformation. Goaded on by their fears, the knights threw off their habitual indifference to politics, and declared themselves ready to give help by all means in their power to the party which stood for the defence of law and property. The group of respectable aristocrats, though scarcely threatened by the law of Catiline, readily joined hands with the wealthy knights, partly out of a vague feeling for order and security, partly through their detestation of a propaganda which aimed at uprooting all established institutions. A coalition was thus speedily formed which had for its object, not merely the defeat of Catiline at the elections, but also, as it was said, the re-establishment of the reign of authority, tranquillity and order in a State infested by the upholders of robbery, sedition, and crime. Catiline was only one of a huge gang of revolutionaries, although admittedly, in the circumstances, he was by far the most dangerous. It was a moment of triumph for the champions of reaction. Even the knights, who, in their pique against the nobles, were generally indifferent and sometimes even favourable to the popular party, now lamented their nonchalance in allowing

* Drümann, G. R., v. 416. † Sall., Cat., 17 and 25.

free play to revolutionary daring, and gladly recognised the necessity of a return to firm and efficient government. 63 B.C.

Dearness of money.

Catiline and his supporters had thus to face a far greater resistance than they had ever expected. Against them were arrayed both Conservatives and knights. Yet, unfortunately for the coalition, the very excess of their precautions had tended rather to intensify the perils that they apprehended. In the midst of all this excitement trade and enterprise were at a standstill; money grew alarmingly dear and the failure of debtors became increasingly frequent.* But this only provided fresh material for the propaganda of Catiline and gave debtors a more lively sense of the necessity of a revolution to secure their freedom. The capital and the country were soon reduced to a state of absolute chaos, during which Crassus took fright and disappeared from Rome and Cæsar discreetly kept aloof from affairs.

Psychology of Cæsar.

Cæsar's temperament indeed affords a curious study in nervous psychology. It seems as though he were perpetually oscillating between opposite extremes, between an excess of temerity and an excess of caution. No sooner had he permitted some gust of passion or foolhardy caprice to carry him into a position of real danger than he turned back, no matter how successful his attempt, and relapsed into a prudence that bordered on timidity—only to break out again into all his old daring at the first suitable provocation. Thus when he was still almost a boy he had rashly excited the hostility of Sulla, but had then been content to remain quiet and at a distance until his death. After refusing to take part in the insurrection of Lepidus he had boldly come forward as the accuser of Dolabella and Antonius. He had afterwards retired once more from Rome, but no sooner was he at Rhodes than he recruited, at his own cost, a troop of volunteers for the Mithridatic war. After his fierce conflicts with the Conservatives during the last two years, and after securing the office of Pontifex Maximus in the teeth of Catulus and Servilius, he had now determined, in one of his periodical fits of self-suppression, that he had already allowed himself to be carried too far. He therefore refrained from staking his career upon Catiline's new venture and confined his efforts to his candidature for the Prætorship.

Cicero would have been glad enough to behave likewise; but his position as Consul allowed him no choice. Once more

* Val. Max., iv. 8, 3.

63 B.C. he found himself in an exceedingly embarrassing situation. No doubt the coalition of all the respectable classes was a great encouragement to stand firm against Catiline and his agitation. But he could not help knowing that Catiline enjoyed considerable support among the mass of the people, whose admiration he was very reluctant to sacrifice. He made up his mind that if he opposed Catiline—as he must—he would do so rather by indirect means than by an open declaration of war. He therefore began by purchasing the neutrality of his colleague by surrendering to him his own province of Macedonia; and then proceeded to draw up a bill increasing the severity of the penalties for corruption and modifying the methods of voting in a manner that would be disadvantageous to Catiline. A well-known lawyer, Servius Sulpicius, was entrusted with the drafting of this measure.*

Position of Cicero.

The election campaign.

Such was the situation when, towards the beginning of July, amid general uncertainty, the electoral campaign was set on foot. The Conservatives were angry, the middle class doubtful and wavering, the popular party openly divided against itself. Besides Catiline there were three other candidates for the Consulship: Servius Sulpicius, who had drawn up the electoral bill, Lucius Licinius Murena, an ex-general of Lucullus, and Decimus Junius Silanus, the husband of Servilia. Crassus seems to have given his support to Murena, while Cæsar entered the lists for Silanus, and Cato for Sulpicius. Disquieting rumours soon began to circulate. It was said that Catiline was summoning Sulla's veterans from Etruria for the elections: that, if they came, they would shrink from nothing, not even from the assassination of Cicero.† The truth was simply that Catiline had brought up bands of peasants from the neighbourhood of Arezzo and Fiesole to swell the ranks of his supporters. It can easily be imagined what popular report, among Italians, and at a time of unusual excitement, contrived to build up out of this simple circumstance. Every one in Rome had his own version of the tale, and every one was anxious to out-do his neighbour in divulging it. Men exaggerated what they had been told, declared they had seen what they had only heard, and added a wealth of picturesque detail, till, after passing through some thousands of mouths, what had originally been hazarded as a flimsy conjecture reappeared as a substantial and detailed narrative. Rome was full of people who had heard, or had seen,

* For this measure see Drümann, G. R., v. 445 f.

† Plut., Cic., 14.

or knew for certain, and could not contain themselves from telling all they knew. In an unwonted epidemic of civic zeal many ran off to give full information to the magistrates, in the vague desire of emphasising their own share in the general commotion and of posing not as simple spectators but as important actors in the drama of the hour.* 63 B.C.

Progress of the campaign.

In political circles these rumours were much discussed and very varying estimates formed as to their meaning. The Conservatives not only accepted the entire story, but, whether out of party spite, or because some of them really believed it, insisted on denouncing as accomplices all who ventured to question its credibility. In the popular party, on the other hand, there was a general inclination, even among the Senators, to dismiss the whole tale as a wild fiction. Meanwhile the elections were at hand and popular excitement was still steadily rising. Money had been lavishly distributed by Cæsar, by Metellus, by Catiline, and by Murena, who had come back wealthy from the East. Bands of peasants and labourers brought up by Catiline were entering the city daily, whilst the Conservatives and the capitalists were straining every nerve against his candidature. Day by day the reports grew more alarming. It was said that soldiers were being enrolled in Etruria at Catiline's cost, that a general insurrection in imitation of Lepidus was being prepared, and that Catiline was bent on a wholesale massacre of the Senate.†

Cicero's detectives.

The forecasts became more and more uncertain. The ominous rumours of civil war, the violence of the Conservative campaign and the acute financial depression had done much to frighten the middle-class proprietors. But Catiline was meeting with considerable success in his appeal to the desperate and discontented classes at Rome; and he was calling the whole proletariat population of Italy to the metropolis. The Conservatives grew daily more insecure. They continued to repeat their story that the Republic was being threatened by a widespread conspiracy, in which not only Catiline but also Cæsar and the whole of the Democratic party were concerned. Angry spirits amongst them began to cry out for stern measures. Cicero did his best to give his new-found allies proof of his anxiety for the maintenance of order. He had attached to Catiline as a spy a certain Quintus Curius, a young chatterer who brought all that Catiline either said or did to his mistress Fulvia, a woman of good family but degraded character;

* Plut., Cic., 14. † *Id.* 15.

63 B.C. Fulvia, of course, communicated her information at once to Cicero. The Consul's zeal was indeed exemplary. He listened to every report and followed up every clue. There was hardly an hour in the day when he was not giving audience to professional spies, or to informers not yet initiated into that odious brotherhood. He made it his business to credit all the rumours unfavourable to Catiline and there was scarcely a sitting of the Senate in which, reinforced by Cato, he did not attack Catiline for corruption and threaten him with a prosecution.* But he steadily refused to move a single step further. He was not so blind as to be unaware that the matter was still in the region of suspicion and presumption, and that no such substantial evidence had as yet come into his hands as would justify him in the adoption of drastic measures.†

Withdrawal of Servius Sulpicius.

An unforeseen incident now intervened still further to complicate an already perplexing situation. Servius, the lawyer who had drafted the electoral bill, had put himself forward for the Consulship, but, keeping strictly within the terms of his own bill, was refusing to expend any money on his candidature. Unfortunately, amongst a number of candidates who were lavish with their funds, nobody was disposed to pay serious attention to a miserly politician who behaved as if his precious law were really intended to be observed. Servius was so disgusted at this treatment that, in the very midst of the electoral campaign, he announced his intention of withdrawing his candidature and prosecuting Murena for bribery. He set to work on the collection of evidence for his charge with the assistance of Cato, who was indignant that the best of the Conservative candidates should be excluded from the contest.‡

Catiline's Sullan veterans.

A scandal of this sort on the very eve of the voting disheartened the Conservatives and was a great encouragement to Catiline. In the confidence of impending victory he delivered a great speech a few days before the election telling the voters that it was now futile for the poor to rely upon the rich for the improvement of their lot.§ Cicero, bent upon wrecking the candidature of Catiline, but without exposing himself to unpopularity and with the semblance of having popular interests at heart, was soon forced to take the field against his enemy with some more serious accusation than an absurd charge of corruption. It is possible that the peasants brought

* Cic., Pro. Mar., xxv. 51. † Plut., Cic., 14.
‡ Cic., Pro. Mur., xxiv. 48.
§ *Id.*, xxv. 50. See John, E. G. C. V., 744.

up by Catiline to vote, many of whom were accompanied by Sullan veterans, may have let fall some imprudent remarks, as they sat chattering in the taverns at Catiline's expense. It is likely enough that the old Sullan Manlius waxed sarcastic against a timid and vainglorious breed of talkers who harboured new-fangled constitutional scruples and relied on legislative action for the abolition of debt. The survivor of a generation of revolutions could tell them that the only way to free debtors was the short way with the sword. All this was skilfully exaggerated by the Conservatives, and Cicero made use of it to disguise his hostility to Catiline under the all-embracing pretext of national defence. He pretended that it was not the man of the people whom he was fighting, but the felon from whom even Cæsar and Crassus had held openly aloof, the enemy of the public peace who had vowed to make the metropolis a scene of fire and carnage. But would the electors attach sufficient credence to these reports? Would the tide of indignation rise high enough for Catiline to be submerged? It seemed anything but certain, yet it was already the eleventh hour. At all costs it was imperative to provoke some sensation which would make the blood of the voter run cold with fear. 63 B.C.

Cicero plays his last card.

Yielding most probably to pressure from the Conservative chiefs, Cicero prepared a master-stroke which was to give the death-blow to Catiline's candidature. On the day before the date fixed for the elections he suddenly convened the Senate and, with a great parade of solemnity, demanded that the voting should be postponed for several days in order that an inquiry might be held next day on the dangers which threatened the life of the State. On the following day he gave an elaborate and emphatic recital of all the reports which were current as to Catiline's intentions and practically challenged Catiline to clear himself, in the hope of extracting some compromising confession. Catiline replied, with laconic insolence, that his intention was to become the head of the sole vigorous organ which still existed in the State—the people.*

The scene at the elections.

Cicero's manœuvre had failed, and it was now necessary to proceed with the elections, which took place in the last days of July or the first days of August.† On the morning of the

* Cic., Pro. Mur., xxv. 51. See John, E. G. C. V., 750.

† It was long believed that the elections took place in October, but John has shown, I think once and for all (E. G. C. V., 750–755), that they took place almost at the normal time, at the end of July or the beginning of August.

63 B.C. voting the result was still so uncertain that both sides made unprecedented exertions to bring up supporters. Cicero took his place as President of the Assembly surrounded by a body-guard of friends; he was wearing a cuirass which gleamed as he opened his toga. All this was contrived to make an impression upon the public, and particularly upon timid and undecided electors who might possibly be persuaded to vote for Catiline. The neighbouring temples were guarded by soldiers; practically the whole of the equestrian order was mobilised; nobles and knights who had never appeared in the Campus Martius in their lives came with set and anxious faces to the voting booths, followed by a procession of friends and clients. The voting was very close; but once more money had overborne numbers. In spite of the support of the proletariat, Catiline was not elected. Cæsar, however, secured the Prætorship, and Metellus the Tribuneship, but with Cato for a colleague.

The Pro Murena.

There was still one chance open to Catiline. If Murena were condemned in the suit which Sulpicius was bringing against him, the election would have to be fought over again. But Cicero took up Murena's case in an eloquent speech which has come down to us, and Murena was acquitted.

The real conspiracy.

After this third defeat Catiline had no other alternative but to renounce all hopes of the Consulship and retire into private life. Cicero could congratulate himself on having emerged skilfully and honourably from the painful position in which Catiline's candidature had placed him, without sacrifice of his popularity either with the Conservatives or with the Democrats. But Catiline was too proud and violent a nature to acquiesce in defeat. Furious at his discomfiture and dreading reprisals from the Conservatives, he took a daring and decisive step. He entrusted Manlius, who was returning to Etruria, with a sum of money, charging him to recruit a small army among the distressed; and he persuaded the most desperate of his partisans, relying on the support of the troops of Manlius, to attempt a *coup d'état* by the assassination of Cicero and the forcible seizure of the Consulship.* August and September went by in the preparations for this attempt.

Cicero bluffs Catiline in the Senate.

But it was impossible to preserve secrecy during the whole of this time. Before long the comparative tranquillity which had followed on the elections, was ruffled anew with rumours of revolution, and Cicero was again assailed with the familiar

* See John, E. G. C. V., 755 and 791.

outcries and exhortations to take measures in self-defence. What was he to do? Once more he displayed the greatest assiduity in collecting information, but carefully avoided bringing matters to a climax or adopting any measures of severity which might have seemed odious to the people. But the Conservatives were not to be placated. They cried out for the proclamation of a state of siege; and as the rumours of the conspiracy became increasingly definite, they put greater and greater pressure upon the unfortunate Consul. Cicero, who had long been wavering, was at last moved to action, not only by the agitation among the upper classes, but also by the danger to which he was personally exposed. With every one round him calling out for drastic repression, he made up his mind to convene the Senate for October 21, and to give an account of the most serious reports which were then in circulation, declaring them to be substantially true and confirmed by information which he, in his capacity of Consul, had succeeded in procuring. In this way the Senate would be induced to proclaim a state of siege, and the Conservatives would be satisfied. In the sitting of October 21, at which Catiline boldly put in an appearance, he declared that he "knew all," that he had the most certain proof of the gravest charges that were made against Catiline—which was certainly not the case at that time.* Amongst other things he declared that on October 27, Caius Manlius was to take up arms in Etruria at the head of an army, and that Catiline had fixed the 28th for a massacre of the Senate. Catiline was invited to clear himself, and gave an insolent reply. But the Senate, convinced by the explicit declarations of Cicero (for no one thought it possible that he could make such serious statements without certain proof) no longer ventured to hesitate and a state of siege was proclaimed.† 63 B.C.

Proclamation of a state of siege.

Great was the sensation at Rome when this news became known. Men always tend to judge the present by their memories of the past; and there was a general expectation that, as at the time of the Gracchi and of Saturninus, the

Reception of the state of siege.

* When Cicero spoke he cannot possibly yet have been in possession of sure and definite information with regard to his most serious charges. This is proved, not only by Plut., Cic., 14 and Sall., Cat., 30, but by Cicero himself (Cat., i. iii., 7), who manifests the naïvest satisfaction in proving that what he had asserted about Manlius had turned out correct; "*Comperi omnia*" (I know all), seems to have been Cicero's phrase, as is clear from the malicious allusions of Clodius and Antony. See Cic., A., i. 14, 5; F. v. 5, 2.

† Cic., Cat., i. iii., 7; i. ii., 4; cf. Tarentino, C. C., 86.

63 B.C. Consul would be seen calling Senators and knights to arms and making a massacre of the leaders of the popular party. Cæsar must have passed several hours of terrible suspense. But nothing of the sort took place. In spite of the impression caused by the speech of Cicero and the precautions adopted in consequence, the Senators returned quietly to their homes. Nothing more was done except to place garrisons in different parts of the city. The times had changed; and the impetuous passions of a more primitive era no longer held sway. As in all over-rich and self-indulgent communities, men had lost their daring and were less quick to action; they acknowledged the new restraints of fear, of humanity and even of conscience. Some of the Senators still boldly affirmed that Cicero was lying.* Others declared that, the panic once over, the popular party would not leave the murder of its chiefs unavenged. Others had weakly consented to decree the state of siege, but were not really persuaded that the danger was sufficient. Others again were restrained by moral, legal or constitutional scruples. Cicero, who should have given the order putting the decree into execution, was afraid of doing anything which might draw down upon himself the traditional hatred felt for a Nasica or an Opimius, or of posing in any way as a latter-day Sulla. Moreover the mere threat of coercion now produced upon a sensitive public an effect quite as great as coercion itself in a less civilised epoch. The Conservative party was therefore easily satisfied with the vague threat of martial law, and with a prosecution for assault brought against Catiline by the young Lucius Æmilius Lepidus, another son of the revolutionary chief of 78, who was however, a member of the aristocratic party.

Catiline tries bluff.

Yet somehow the agitation in the city did not abate, and the stream of rumours flowed on unchecked. Persons in high position were constantly receiving anonymous letters purporting to contain extraordinary disclosures. Cicero must have felt himself particularly insecure. Conscious that part at least of the revelations he had made before the Senate was untrue, he must have feared that he might have to pay dearer than any of his partisans. He began to be slightly re-assured when one day Crassus brought him in a bundle of miscellaneous letters and denunciations which he had received.† It was some satisfaction to know that the powerful banker had become so uneasy at the mere threat of a popular revolution that he

* Dion, xxxvii. 31. † Plut., Cic., 15.

thoroughly believed in the reality of the danger. It was now Catiline's turn to play at bluff. Somewhat discouraged by the universal hostility and suspicion with which he saw himself regarded, he adopted an ingenious stratagem in order to shelter himself and watch for an opportunity of recovering his ground. He paid a visit to Marcus Lepidus and asked him for permission to live in his house. This would show the public that he was so confident in his own innocence, that he was not afraid to live under the daily observance of an aristocrat in high position. When Lepidus refused to become his honorary gaoler, Catiline, with still greater hardihood, turned to Cicero for an asylum. When Cicero in his turn rejected him, he appealed to a certain Marcus Marcellus, who took him in.* 63 B.C.

Perplexity of the public.

Impartial members of the public were now completely at sea. Whom were they to believe—Cicero or Catiline? Cicero was certainly a man of distinguished position and recognised integrity. But it was truly singular that after solemnly proclaiming the imminence of a revolution, he took no measures against the man whom he had declared to be its chief. Catiline was no doubt a man of great daring, but was it credible that, if he were maturing a revolution, he would have the effrontery to visit the Consul who accused him and ask him to be so good as to put him up in his house? From time to time there was a lull in the great storm of rumours and then the suspicion would gain ground that Cicero had invented the whole story. Fortunately for Cicero, official news arrived within a few days that Manlius had shown himself openly in Etruria at the head of a small army;† and a short time afterwards letters came in from Manlius himself to Quintus Marcius in which he declared that he and his supporters had taken up arms because they could no longer endure the debts with which they were burdened.‡

Cicero the man of the hour.

This news caused a tremendous sensation. So Catiline was the knave, and Cicero the model citizen! If the public was excited, the Conservatives went almost wild. There was no time to be lost. This was a genuine Civil War, and "thorough" must be the word. The Senators were thrown completely off their balance. After hesitating for so long, they decided in a fit of nervous hurry to adopt the most extreme measures of precaution. If the whole of Italy had been in revolt they could not have done more. Rewards were promised to all who would give information about the plot.

* Cic., in Cat., i. viii., 19. Dion, xxxvii. 32 (with a few minor inaccuarcies).

† Sall., Cat., 30; Plut., Cic., 15. ‡ Sall., Cat., 33.

63 B.C. Quintus Metellus, who was still awaiting his Cretan triumph, was sent into Apulia, Quintus Marcius into Etruria, Quintus Pompeius Rufus to Campania, Quintus Metellus Celer to the Marches.* Cicero, to his huge surprise and delight, became, within a day and a night, the object of universal admiration. He was thought to have brought to the defence of the Republic an energy and a clear-sightedness that were little short of miraculous.

Catiline's final arrangements and departure.

Yet for all this he did not yet see his way to taking action against Catiline. But Catiline played into his hands. Feeling the sympathies of his few remaining allies slipping from him and watching the violence of his enemies growing daily in intensity, he decided at last to throw off the mask. He seems to have entertained for a moment the plan of making an attack, [Præneste.] on November 1, upon the fortress of Palestrina.† When, owing to the vigilance of Cicero, this project had to be abandoned, he escaped the watch of his host and on the night of November 6, ‡ in the house of Læca, assembled a meeting of those of his friends who were most deeply compromised in his schemes. He demonstrated to them the necessity for a universal insurrection throughout Italy to reinforce the movement of Manlius, and gave an outline of his plan, which was to begin with the assassination of Cicero,§ whom he regarded, like his opponents, as his most formidable enemy. Two knights who were present agreed to visit Cicero next morning and despatch him; but Fulvia immediately informed the Consul, who convoked an extraordinary meeting of the Senate on the following day, November 7. Catiline, unabashed to the last, duly attended the meeting; but at his entry into the room he was shunned by all his colleagues. Alone upon his seat he listened to the violent invective directed against him by Cicero, amidst the applause of the entire Senate. Catiline realised that he had nothing more to hope from the Senators. He rose, uttered a few ominous words, and went out. He left the same evening for Etruria, completely at liberty and with a numerous following. Cicero was so anxious to avoid responsibility for violence that he did not dare to hinder his departure. Rather he rejoiced at his escape, even though it might lead to a Civil War. If Catiline took up arms he would shake off his

The First Catilinarian.

* Sall., Cat., 30.
† Cic., Cat., i. iii,, 8.
‡ See Tarentino, C. C., 89 f. His reasoning about the date is good.
§ John, E. G. C. V., 792.

last defenders and Cicero would once more have extricated himself from all complications amid universal applause. 63 B.C.

It is true that Cicero's triumph was not wholly uncontested. A few furious Conservatives boldly maintained that the Consul should have laid hands on Catiline and put him to death, while there was a small number who declared thst Catiline had been maligned.* But these criticisms hardly touched Cicero, who had now suddenly eclipsed both Cæsar and Crassus and become second only to Pompey, the most popular man in Rome. Unfortunately the struggle was not yet over. Those among Catiline's partisans who were most deeply concerned in his plot, Lentulus, Cethegus, Statilius, Ceparius, lost their nerve after Catiline, the only man of ability in the movement, had left them. They had now been abandoned by the great majority of their supporters, who had expected to secure the abolition of debt by easy and constitutional means, and were in no mood for war and bloodshed. Realising the danger of their position, they hurriedly pieced together a ridiculous conspiracy on the lines of the plan sketched out by their leader. Their idea was to raise a movement among the proletariat and the slaves, to set light to the city in several quarters at once, and so increase the general disorder at the moment when Catiline was approaching with his army. It was the foolish concoction of men half frightened out of their wits by their danger. The next step was feebler still. They approached certain ambassadors of the Allobroges who had come to Rome to lay some grievances before the Senate, and asked whether their people would consent to come to their assistance with pikemen and cavalry.

The plotters lose their nerve.

This was their supreme mistake. Of course the Allobroges denounced them, and Cicero at last procured written proofs of their treachery. Acting for once with great rapidity, he had the chief conspirators arrested on the morning of December 3, and brought them before the Senate. There he showed them the letters given to the ambassadors for the chieftains of the Allobroges and confronted them with the ambassadors themselves. In their confusion they were all surprised into a confession.

The plotters confess.

The report of their detection was at once dispersed and distorted in every corner of the city. Rumour declared that there had been a vast conspiracy to burn down Rome and bring

A night of panic in Rome.

* The second Catilinarian, delivered to the people on November 8, is a reply to these two opposing lines of attack.

63 B.C. the Gauls into Italy. The impressionable metropolis was horror-struck at the suggestion. Not only the rich capitalists and the nobles, but all who possessed a little money, the moderate bourgeoisie, the tax-farmers, the merchants, the shopkeepers, all were indignant and panic-stricken, as at the imminence of a supreme ordeal. The public which Cæsar and Crassus had tried in vain to awaken was at length touched to the quick. It had been touched in the year 70: but how changed was the situation seven years later. It was now to the Conservatives that it appealed for help, and appealed so emphatically that even the chiefs of the popular party, even the proletariat itself, always faithful to its demagogues, was carried away in the swirl of the tide. From all sides a great and anxious crowd made its way to the Senate-house to hear the news; and when, at the end of the cross-examination, Cicero made his appearance outside he received a great ovation. That night hardly any one slept at Rome. Men went to visit one another in their houses to ask counsel and comfort, and to nerve themselves for the unknown dangers of the morrow. The Conservatives, at once angry and exultant, were chafing to have done with all weakness towards the Democrats. They desired to strike not only at the accomplices of Catiline but at all the popular leaders and especially at Cæsar. The capitalists and the middle classes, in the full flush of their patriotic fervour, prepared to appear in arms the following day to keep the revolutionaries in order. So loud was the outcry for making an example that certain citizens whose sons were compromised in the agitation, bethought them that according to ancient law they had the right to sit in judgment on their own children and had them put to death by their slaves.

The enquiry in the Senate.

Next day the Senate met to continue the inquiry and hear further witnesses. But it was almost impossible to maintain a judicial atmosphere. The chiefs of the Conservative party, Catulus in particular, began to put captious questions to the conspirators, to induce them to confess that Cæsar had been privy to the plot. An informer, no doubt in the hope of helping the conspirators, declared that Crassus was involved, but the outcries of the Senators stopped him midway in his statement. At one moment report spread through the House that the populace was rising to deliver the prisoners. The confusion was indescribable. All had lost their presence of mind, except Cicero and Cæsar. The extraordinary outburst of popular excitement had rudely awakened Cicero out of the delirious dream

in which he had been living for the last month and recalled him to something like his natural caution. Even in the thick of the excitement he descried the dangers which would be entailed by the adoption of too revolutionary measures.* But what was to be done? The public was angry and was appealing to him as the pillar of the Republic. It was impossible for him now to draw back; or he at least had not the courage to do so. He fell back, in the difficulty, on an old and tried expedient. He resolved to precipitate the crisis, and to make the following day decide the fate of the conspirators. As for Cæsar, he too saw the dilemma in which he was placed. If he kept silent he would be charged with meanness or cowardice. On the other hand, in the excited state of public opinion, if he defended the accused, he would be almost encouraging his enemies to employ violence against him. 63 B.C.

The debate on the death penalty.

On the 5th the Senate met again; a huge and excited crowd blocked up the Forum, the temples and all the streets in the neighbourhood of the Senate-house. Silanus, the first Senator to be asked his opinion, voted for death. All the others who were asked after him voted the same way, until it came to the turn of Cæsar. Cæsar, after some severe reflections upon the crime of the accused, pointed out that the death penalty would be both illegal and dangerous, and proposed in its place compulsory detention in a municipality and the confiscation of their property. His skilful and vigorous appeal shook the resolution of many of the Senators, and opinion seemed more or less evenly divided. Cicero spoke in ambiguous terms, but gave it to be understood that he inclined to Cæsar's view.

The Fourth Catilinarian.

But Cato rose to speak definitely against Cæsar's suggestion and he pleaded so vehemently, he was so emphatic in his demand that respect for law and order should be enforced by the pronouncement of a death penalty, that the Senate was converted to his view and capital punishment decreed.

Death of the conspirators and of Catiline.

To Cicero was left the duty of carrying this order into execution. His task would be to collect the conspirators from the different houses where they were guarded and conduct them to the Mamertine prison, where they would be strangled by the soldiers who acted as public executioners. But the extreme Conservatives proposed to escort the Consul on his funereal mission through the city and to the prison, and make an impressive demonstration of law and order before the noisy and riotous populace of the metropolis, which was itself, as they

* Plut., Cic., 19–20.

63 B.C. declared, morally implicated in the treason. Most of the Senators joined in the escort; there were a few exceptions, one of whom was Cæsar, whom a group of knights had threatened with swords as he left the Senate-house. So the streets of Rome witnessed the passing of this strange and solemn hangman's procession, composed of the whole Senatorial aristocracy, the rich financiers and the well-to-do merchants, who had paused in their wrangling for the moment, with the chief executive officer of the Republic at its head. When the ceremony was over, Cicero was escorted back by the crowd to his house amidst enthusiastic demonstrations of confidence. Justice had had her victims. A few weeks later Catiline, who had only been able to arm a few thousand men, was easily defeated and killed at Pistoja in Etruria.

[Pistoria.]

Italy and the conspiracy.

Cicero fondly imagined that with these drastic measures he had quenched the flame of revolution which had been spreading through Italy. In the complacency of success he forgot his own doubts and hesitations. In reality, if a wild and dangerous conflagration had been quickly and triumphantly stamped out, it was merely because Italy had never been inflammable. Italians had indeed been very ready to respond to Catiline's original proposal for the abolition of debt, when it appeared for a moment both compatible with security and easy of attainment. But when what had claimed to be an ordinary political agitation became the nucleus of an oligarchical and revolutionary conspiracy, shaped rather by the inevitable pressure of events than in accordance with any clear and persistent policy, the country had condemned and even opposed the enterprise. The old revolutionary generation of the Social and Civil Wars, the contemporaries of Saturninus and Marius, of Sulla, Carbo and Sertorius, had disappeared from the scene, and among the men of the new era the same transformation was being effected, if on a somewhat lesser scale, as we have witnessed since 1870 in the revolutionary Europe of the nineteenth century. The increase of wealth and comfort, of enjoyments and education, among the masses, the manifold refinements of urban life, the general diffusion of a more lavish and commodious style of living, had combined to make Italians more timid and irresolute, more easily susceptible to panic, and more convinced of the desirability of law and order. The new bourgeoisie which had grown up in the various cities of Italy was a prosperous and pleasure-loving society, entirely unfamiliar with military life, owning property in land and

End of the revolutionary era.

houses and slaves, and chiefly pre-occupied with commerce and industry, speculation and contracts, and the other manifold varieties of money making. Such people asked for nothing better than to be dispensed from paying their debts if a mere legislation could relieve them from the disagreeable obligation. But they did not intend to pursue this pleasing illusion by staking their present possessions and future expectations upon the perilous hazard of a revolution. The landed proprietors, especially, dreaded the prospect of civil war, owing to the increasing cultivation of the vine and olive, which only bear fruit after many years of growth and thus entail far more serious losses through war and devastation than crops which are sown, gathered and consumed from one year to the next. 63 B.C.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RETURN OF POMPEY AND THE TRIAL OF CLODIUS

The siege of Jerusalem and the Sabbath—The capture of Jerusalem—Pompey in the Temple—The reaction in Italy after the conspiracy of Catiline—Political incoherence of the upper classes—The Roman proletariat and the workmen's associations—The popular party becomes the party of the proletariat—Cæsar in conflict with the reaction—The disappointment, anxiety and money troubles of Cicero—Character of Pompey—Clodius and the sacrilege at the festival of Bona Dea—The return of Pompey—Trial of Clodius—Cicero, Clodia and Terentia—Acquittal of Clodius—Cæsar and his creditors—His departure for Spain—Lucretius and his poem.

Pompey before Jerusalem.

POMPEY meanwhile was still detained before Jerusalem. With the help of Hyrcanus the city itself had been easily captured; but a part of the inhabitants had taken refuge in the Temple, which they defended with the stubborn desperation of their race. The Temple was built on a hill dominating the city, and was surrounded by a fortress with walls of enormous height. Pompey had sent to Tyre for siege engines, which he erected against the rock; but the defenders retorted so furiously with arrows and stones that the operations had been protracted into a long and difficult siege.

The Jewish Sabbath.

The surrender came about at last in a curious manner. Once every seven days Pompey noticed that the besieged seemed to be stupefied into inactivity and allowed the Romans to work unmolested at their engines. He enquired of Hyrcanus, who told him that every seventh day was the Sabbath, the day on which the law obliged the faithful to abstain from all labour, which, as interpreted by the devout, included even self-defence.* Pompey ordered his soldiers to work only on the Sabbath; he was thus enabled, within three months, to

* Dion, xxxvii., 16; Joseph., A. J., xiv. 4, 3; B. J., i. 7, 3.

raise his towers up to the height of the walls and to move to the attack. Faustus, son of Sulla, was the first over the ramparts; but there was horrible carnage before the capture was completed. Curious to inspect the sanctuary which had cost him so much pains, Pompey made his way into the inmost shrine of the Temple, where none but the high priest was allowed to enter. But he looked in vain for a statue or a picture of the Godhead. He admired the strange seven-branched candlestick, which the Jews seemed specially to venerate, the table of gold, the huge store of incense for worship, and, hidden away in the cellars, the store of treasure which should have served to recompense the Roman legionary for his labours. But the God of the Bible then gave not the least striking proof of that power whose fear was soon to be spread so far throughout the world. Alone of all the gods of the Orient his gold was respected by a Roman adventurer. Pompey was so overcome by the weird fanaticism of his Jewish surroundings that he dared not lay hands on the treasure.* 63 B.C.

Pompey and the Temple treasure.

Pompey was still in Palestine when he was met by an embassy from the King of Egypt, which had come to do him homage, to make him a large present of money and to deliver him a strange invitation. He was to go with his legions into Egypt to assist the King to quell a revolt which had lately broken out.† Disquieted by the schemes of Crassus and Cæsar and despairing of recognition as King by the Senate, Ptolemy Auletes was now endeavouring to gain a new ally in his defence. If Pompey accepted the invitation and re-established order in Egypt, he could hardly help pleading his cause in the Senate on his return and securing him the coveted title of Friend and Ally of the Roman people. The scheme was characteristically crafty; but it was not without a dangerous side. It might help Ptolemy to win his country; but it might also help him to lose it. What was he to do if the Roman defender, after quelling the disaffection, refused to evacuate his country and annexed it to Rome? With a Lucullus this would have been a very serious risk. But Ptolemy had to do with a general who was too cautious rather than too daring for his purpose. Pompey reflected that an Egyptian adventure would most probably expose him to a double attack; it would offend the party that refused to recognise Ptolemy and was opposed altogether to

Pompey and Ptolemy.

* Joseph., A. J., xiv. 4, 4; Zon., v. 6; Cic., Pro. Flac., xxviii. 67. This is sufficient evidence to refute Dion, xxxvii. 16.

† App., Mithr., 114.

62 B.C. Egyptian intervention; still more would it offend the noisy clique which was just now crying out for intervention, under the influence of Crassus and Cæsar. He was therefore soon finished with the embassy; he pocketed the money, but refused the invitation. He then declared Palestine and Cœlesyria a Roman province, laid Jerusalem under a tribute, gave the high priesthood to Hyrcanus, and, taking Aristobulus away with him as a prisoner, returned to Pontus.*

The reaction after Catiline.

Meanwhile Italy was slowly recovering from the Catilinarian terror; but it had left an indelible mark on her public life. In times of quick excitement and unstable balance, a trivial incident, if it chances to coincide with the close of a long and unconscious development, may be charged with far-reaching significance. The conspiracy of Catiline had not been formidable in itself, but it had burst in with a storm of fresh air upon the sultry atmosphere of Roman politics; it had touched every class and party and individual in the State; it had loosened long standing agreements and snapped many ancient attachments; and when it passed away as quickly as it had come it left the whole field of policy transformed.

Break-up of the Moderate Democratic party.

Its most immediate effect was the break-up of the post-Revolutionary Liberalism, with its temperate and patronising projects of reform, which had grown up around Pompey in the year 70. This party had drawn its strength from the middle class and a part of the aristocracy, from a union of landlords, merchants and financiers with the progressive nobility and men of means and leisure; but it had been gradually enfeebled, partly by the growth of political indifference, partly because it had falsified the expectations and wearied the short-lived patience of its promoters; and partly because its members had been frightened or excited into the two extreme camps by the emergence of the question of debt. The respectable and educated classes, who had never taken a conspicuous part in politics, retired terror-stricken to the management of their private concerns, which mostly needed all the management that they could give them; they conceived an incurable distrust for the politicians and programmes of the Democrats, without a recovery of confidence in their Conservative opponents; and with a comprehensive contempt for all political squabbling, left the two parties to fight it out as best they could. The results of this sudden paralysis of public opinion

* Masi., V. S. A., 25.

can hardly be exaggerated. It transformed the Conservative party into a knot of furious reactionaries. All the wildest and most fanatical spirits in its ranks, encouraged by their easy success against Catiline, and confident that the sudden divorce between democracy and respectability would prove to be lasting, domineered over the moderate section in the Senate and entered, under the leadership of Catulus and Cato, into a life and death struggle against the popular party. Their plan of campaign was to use the prosecutions of the accomplices of Catiline as an opportunity for a far reaching and systematic persecution of their opponents. 62 B.C.

The moment seemed propitious. Pompey was still at a distance; Metellus Nepos, his Roman representative, could safely be ignored. Crassus had been frightened by the conspiracy out of his popular sympathies. Cæsar alone remained: and Cæsar was defeated, discredited and detested. Upon his devoted head the storm that had only just been lulled threatened to descend once more in all its fury. We may wonder what would have become of him at this moment had he been of a more sensitive and delicate temperament, or disposed to allow aristocratic prejudice or ethical scruples to dictate his action. But it was his conduct at this difficult crisis which first showed how marvellously Cæsar was adapted for the conflicts of his turbulent age. Cæsar was unalterably, almost naïvely, indifferent to all moral distinctions. This indifference was not due to depravity of life; it was inborn in his nature, and unconsciously strengthened by his habits and company, by the bankrupts and swindlers and adventuresses with whom he consorted; conjoined with an unusual excitability of temper, it gave him an extraordinary versatility and plasticity of mind and adapted him to act well or ill, supremely well or supremely ill, as the need might be. **Cæsar at bay.**

But he had never yet been faced with such a situation as this. The knights and all the wealthy had deserted the party and were not to be wooed back; Democracy was more than unpopular: it had become disreputable. Cæsar's remedy was to make it more disreputable still—to transform it avowedly into what it had begun to be during the last four or five years, a party of social discontent.* Concealed in the holes and **Cæsar and the proletariat.**

* Plut., Cat., U. 26; Plut., Cæs., 8. The fact is further proved by the great number of prosecutions for usurpation of citizenship which the Conservatives brought forward in this year. See Lange, R. A., iii. 258, also Cic., A., i. 16, 11.

62 B.C. corners of Rome, in the enormous lodging-houses of the speculative builders of the day, there seethed an innumerable population of freedmen, artisans, pedlars, small shopkeepers, adventurers, beggars and malefactors, swept in from all parts of Italy and the Empire. These men made a living by any occupation, licit or illicit, which the slaves left open to them. They were employed on the public works; they plied their trades as masons, stone-cutters and waggoners, potters and weavers, cooks, florists and flute-players; they put themselves at the service of cabals and individual politicians as cut-throats or spies or go-betweens; they crept on to the register and sold their votes; they stole, they swindled, and they took their part, and more than their part, in the political banquets. Many of them had organised themselves into "Colleges" or associations of working men, which the Senate was now attempting to dissolve as illegal.* Indolent, thriftless, discontented and incapable, perpetually clamouring for employment, yet perpetually cast adrift, this underground population had responded readily to the battle-cry of Catiline and had rallied enthusiastically to promote his campaign. It was still prepared, if it found a leader, to do yeoman service in the cause of anarchy. These were the men who were elected by the Pontifex Maximus, with his henchman the great-nephew of Metellus Macedonicus to repulse the attacks of the fanatical Conservatives, the chosen allies with whom they were now prepared to attack them, no longer on the dangerous battle-ground of economic reform, but in the easier and more accessible arena of ordinary politics.

The question of the Catilinarian executions.

No sooner had Cæsar entered upon his Prætorship than he opened the attack upon Catulus in person. The Conservative leader was accused of having misadministered the funds for repairing the Capitol from the damage inflicted in the Civil War, and it was proposed to transfer this duty to Pompey.† The proposal was defeated by the vigorous opposition of the

* See Waltzing, C. P. R., i. 87–9, for the list of the workmen's associations in Rome and Italy of which traces have been discovered in this period. The laws against them which are referred to in the text are those mentioned by Asconius, in Corn., p. 67 (ed. Kiessling and Schoell), and in Pis., p. 6–7. It is doubtful whether their dissolution took place in 64, since a passage of Cicero (de Pet. Cons., v. 1 and viii. 39), proves that numerous "collegia" and "sodalitates" existed in that year; moreover, Waltzing, i., p. 98, has shown, as against Mommsen, that these laws were directed against associations of all kinds. Further, the text of Asconius in Pis., p. 6–7 has been tampered with. In any case, attempts were made by the Conservatives at this time to deprive workmen of the right of combination.

† Dion, xxxvii. 44; Suet., Cæs., 15.

Conservatives. But soon afterwards Metellus, with the assistance of Cæsar came forward with a still more daring demand—nothing less than that Pompey should be recalled to Italy with his army in order to prevent any further illegal executions of citizens. This frankly raised the question whether the condemnations pronounced by the Senate against the accomplices of Catiline were legal, and was an open threat to those who were using the memories of the Terror to reap an aftermath of vindictive denunciation. The Conservatives were furious at what they considered a flagrant breach of patriotism. Not content with accusing men who had risked their lives in the cause of order, the party of revolution now wished officially to entrust Pompey with the duty of making the *coup d'état!* On the morning of the day when the bill was to be discussed at the Assembly, Cato, who was still Tribune, went unattended to oppose his veto: but Cæsar and Metellus had him chased away with stones by bands of ruffians. Their example was contagious. The Conservatives ran off in their turn to fetch help and appeared in time to drive off Cæsar and Metellus before the bill was passed. 62 B.C.

The question was thus settled for the moment; but the scandal had been too great for things to remain as they were. It was only intensified when Metellus left Rome, with threats of vengeance, to return to Pompey's camp. In spite of the awakening protests of the moderates, the Senate was unable to resist the pressure of the reactionaries and took the grave step of deposing Metellus and Cæsar from their offices. But Cæsar was no stranger to the arts of injured innocence. At the cry of injustice the noisy rabble of his supporters rose in wrath against the decision, and the Senate, still more frightened of disorder than it was of the reactionaries, was obliged to reinstate him in his office.* The Conservative leaders were mad with rage. They attempted to turn the tables by implicating him in the prosecutions against the accomplices of Catiline; but this only increased the dangerous ferment among the populace.† Finally, as a sop to the many-headed Cerberus, the uncompromising Cato had perforce to increase the distributions of corn to the people to a sum of about seven millions, [£130,000] **Attempted deposition of Cæsar and Metellus.**

* Dion, xxxvii. 43; Plut., Cic., 23; Suet., Cæs., 16–17; Plut., Cat., U. 26–29. There are divergences in these accounts between which it is difficult to decide. According to Suetonius, Cæsar and Metellus were deposed; according to Plutarch, Metellus was not deposed, because Cato intervened in his favour.

† Plut., Cæs., 8.

62 B.C. with a proportionate increase in the number of beneficiaries.*

Character of Pompey.

If within the last twelve months the whole political situation had been entirely transformed, the attitude of individuals needed corresponding readjustment. For two persons in particular, for Pompey and for Cicero, the change was of vital consequence. It was known that Pompey was preparing to return home, and every one was asking what part he would play under the altered rules of the game. The Conservatives were very uneasy. They declared that he would use his army to make himself Dictator and abolish the Republic. And yet, but for the difficulty which even the ablest men seem to experience in analysing character amid the heats of a political conflict, nobody could possibly have imagined Pompey assuming the *rôle* of a second Sulla. He himself was indeed at that very moment earnestly considering how he could become reconciled to the Conservatives. During his long absence in the East Pompey had at last found his true bearings. He was indeed a typical example of the hereditary aristocrat as he is sometimes developed under the influence of an advancing civilisation. A graceful and not unsuccessful dilettante in art, literature and science, in politics and war, the very variety and facility of his accomplishments unfitted him for any intense and concentrated endeavour. Skilful and even crafty within his own range, he was yet easily deceived by an active intriguer or unbalanced by the shock of an unexpected rebuff. Though he served ambition and was gratified by power, like the rest of his grasping age, neither violence, nor greed, nor any active self-seeking lay truly at the bottom of his nature; but beneath that kindly and amiable, yet dignified demeanour, as so often in an aristocratic nature, lay cold and unstirred depths of complacency and selfishness.

Pompey's homeward journey.

Such a man was by nature allied rather to a moderate Conservatism than to the doctrines of revolution. In his youth he had rushed to arms in the cause of Sulla. But his early successes had stirred ambitions which linked his fortunes with the popular party. These ambitions he had been enabled to gratify; the East had given him, what it gives to few, the whole of his heart's desire.† He returned to Rome at once

* Plut., Cat., U. 26, puts this law before the proposal of Metellus, which is improbable. It can only have been after the scandal provoked by his proposal that Cato was induced himself to propose a law so much at variance with his ideas. See Lange, R. A., iii. 258.

† For this change in Pompey's character, see the excellent chapter in Dion, xxxvii. 23, which I believe he drew from Livy.

the most renowned, the most powerful and one of the wealthiest of her citizens. He had added new provinces to the Empire, he held kings in the East at his mercy, and he had amassed and safely invested as much money as even a Roman could need. The claims of ambition once finally quieted, his aristocratic and Conservative temperament reasserted its sway. He began to feel a repugnance against the vulgar and turbulent propaganda of his party, and his disgust was increased when he learnt the intrigues of Crassus, the rumoured adultery of his wife Mucia, and the notorious position of Cæsar as the chief of all the rabble of Rome. Whilst the political wiseacres were shaking their heads over his supposed ambitions, he was simply concerned how to secure a successful triumph with the least possible friction and annoyance. In his letters to the Senate he never mentioned the Catilinarian imbroglio.* He had thoughts of divorcing Mucia and contracting some new marriage which would pave the way for his reconciliation with the Conservatives ;† and he proposed, on his way home, to make a sort of royal tour through the Greek world, partly in order to gain time, but partly also to make a final and magnificent display of his greatness and dignity. He crossed first to Mitylene in Lesbos, which he made a free city to please his favourite Theophanes, who was a native of the place; he admired its fine theatre and conceived the project of building one similar, but on a larger scale, at Rome.‡ From Lesbos he went to Rhodes, where he interviewed Posidonius, the philosophic historian so much in vogue among wealthy Romans, and distributed money to the professors.§ Then he moved on to Ephesus, where his army and fleet were collected. 62 B.C.

Change in the character and habits of Cicero.

If the Conservatives might have found an ally where they suspected the deadliest enmity, they had but a lukewarm supporter in Cicero, whom they might justly by now count as one of their own leaders. The conspiracy of Catiline marks a turning point in the life and character of the great writer. Hitherto he had posed as a thrifty and retiring citizen, untouched by the temptations of power and luxury, whose ambitions were reserved for the Republic of letters and who had rather accepted than courted high office in the State. But his encounter with Catiline had turned his head. The emphatic laudation of the knights and the nobility, ordinarily so reserved towards any middle-class achievement, the unprecedented privileges decreed

* Cic., F., v. 7.
† Plut., Cat., U., 30.
‡ Plut., Pomp., 42 ; Vell., ii. 18, 42.
§ Plut., Pomp., 42.

62 B.C. in his honour, including the sounding title of "Father of his Country," all the thousand exaggerations which fear or folly will always circulate on the morrow of even the most trivial disturbance, had combined to take his vain and sensitive nature by storm. He ended by being convinced that he had really saved the Republic from a horrible cataclysm, that he was in fact a capable and far-seeing statesman. Ideas of greatness began to float before his mind. He was no longer contented either with the unsubstantial glories of literature or with the modest life which he had hitherto been leading. Just in this very year, during the growing intensity of the party struggle, he committed one of the greatest indiscretions of his career by buying from Crassus, at the huge sum of 3½ million sesterces, an enormous house on the Palatine.* Anxious to possess a residence more worthy of his new position than the modest and old-fashioned home of his fathers, and unable to provide the necessary means, he was forced to depart from his strict observance of the Cincian law, and to ask the clients whom he defended to advance him large sums, of course without interest—to borrow money in fact from a wide circle of friends. One of his clients alone, Publius Sulla, lent him 2 million sesterces.† It is true that he reckoned on his colleague Antonius, then in Macedonia, to pay his debts; for when he had surrendered him his province, it had been agreed between them that Antonius should give him a part of the booty he would make in his wars.‡ For all that he was contracting enormous debts with very uncertain prospects of payment, and committing the same mistake as Cæsar in fettering his personal liberty with a chain which he would not easily succeed in snapping.

Cicero's indolence.

Moreover, if his ambitions were growing, his vigour and industry were far from keeping pace. While he was busily contracting debts in order to live up to his new position, he was unconsciously changing his personal habits. He had of late become strangely indolent, leaving it to others to defend his actions and not daring to range himself resolutely on the Conservative side. In their attacks against the Conservatives the Democrats still showed a certain respect for his name, and perhaps he hoped by a judicious withdrawal to preserve, if not his old popularity, at any rate a certain prestige

* Cic., F., v. 6, 2; Vell., ii. 14.

† Aul. Gell., N. H., xii. 12.

‡ This intrigue can be detected from Cicero's letters to Atticus, i. 12, 13 and 14, where Teucris is certainly a nickname for Antonius, and from ad Fam., v. 5 and 6. See Drümann, G. R., i². 394, v. 428 f.

among the popular ranks. Whilst parties were coming to blows in the Forum, he therefore remained in the background and confined himself to constant and vainglorious repetitions of the achievements of his Consulship, even making arrangements, it appears, to write a history of the year in Greek. 62 B.C.

Pompey's prize money.

Pompey was now, towards the middle of 62, just about to leave for home. Before embarking, he made the customary distribution of prize money to his companions in arms. Each private soldier received 6,000 sesterces (about £60) and Centurions and Tribunes large sums up to a total which would amount to about £3,000,000. His generals alone had 100,000,000 sesterces, so that if we suppose there were twenty-five of them, each would have a sum equivalent to about £40,000, a substantial recompense for campaigns involving a minimum of danger, and which had not lasted in all more than a short four years.* Finally, he embarked his army and set sail for Greece. He went first of all to Athens, where he stayed some time hearing philosophical lectures, and offered 50 talents to restore the finest of the ancient buildings.† From Athens he sent his wife Mucia a letter announcing her impending divorce.‡ Then he embarked for Italy, and landed towards the end of the year at Brindisi, while the Conservatives were trembling in expectation of a democratic Sulla and Crassus was making hasty arrangements to leave Rome with his family.§

Clodius the degenerate.

Meanwhile at Rome, the hush of suspense which preceded Pompey's arrival had been rudely interrupted in the first days of December by an exciting scandal.‖ Pompeia, the wife of Cæsar, had an intrigue with Clodius, the man who had suborned the legions of Lucullus. Clodius was one of those degenerates who are sometimes found in noble families in the last stages of their decadence. With weak and almost girlish features¶ and the movements and tastes of a woman (to go about in female costume was one of his greatest delights)** he was so utterly depraved as to find enjoyment in none but the most bestial pleasures; open and shameless in the ostentation

* App., Mith., 116; Plin., N. H., xxxvii. 2, 16. It seems clear from Appian that Pliny's 100 million sesterces were not included in the 16,000 talents (384 million sesterces) distributed among the soldiers.

† Plut., Pomp., 42.

‡ *Id.*, and Cic., A., i. 12, 3.

§ Plut., Pomp., 43.

‖ Lange, R. A., iii. 261.

¶ Plut., Cæs., 10; Cic., 28; but *cf.* Drümann, G. R., ii. n. 82.

** Cic., De Har., resp. xxi., 44.

62 B.C. of his vices, savage and passionate in his personal dislikes, he was rather crafty in the petty warfare of spite than skilful in working out any larger project, and too mad and unbalanced to act coherently towards any reasoned end beyond the daily and hourly satisfaction of his disgusting passions.* Rumour had it at Rome that he had seduced, one after the other, all three of his sisters,† and now, since it fell to Pompeia, as Prætor's wife, to preside over the ceremony of the Bona Dea, at which only women could be present, he conceived the fantastic idea of making an assignation with her during the ceremony.

Pompey disbands his army.

Unfortunately he was found out. But a society so frankly sceptical and incredulous as that of Rome at this time might have been expected to pass off the scandal with a laugh, more especially as serious subjects were not lacking to claim the attention of the public. It is true that the alarm caused by Pompey's arrival was rapidly passing off. On his disembarkation at Brindisi, to the great delight and astonishment of the Conservatives, he had disbanded his army, and was making his way towards Rome with a small suite to demand a triumph.

Bad news from Gaul.

But disquieting news was coming in from Gaul. The Allobroges had risen in revolt and had devastated part of the Narbonese province,‡ which the Senate, always weak and hesitating in its foreign policy, had for some time past left to itself. Moreover the Helvetii, who had taken part in the invasion of the Cimbri and Teutones and who had since settled down round the Lake of Geneva, were being pressed on the north-east by the Suevi and were anxious to cross the Roman province on their way to emigrate to the western seaboard.§

The special tribunal for Clodius.

But the Conservative party had no ears for all this. It could think of nothing but Clodius, whose adventure was regarded in the most tragic light. So horrible a sacrilege must not be left unpunished. Clearly Catiline's fate had proved an unsufficient warning. Here was the younger generation threatening to become even more seditious and dissolute than that which had preceded it. It was time to make a summary and deterrent example. The Senate consulted the College of Pontiffs to know if the act of Clodius constituted a sacrilege. When the College replied in the affirmative,‖

* *Cf.* Lombroso, *Uomo Delinquente* (*The Criminal*), vol. ii. chaps. 1 and 2, and the whole psychology of the morally insane.

† Plut., Cic., 29.

‡ Dion. xxxvii. 47, 48.

§ Cæs., B. G., i. 2.

‖ Cic., A., i. 13, 3.

it ordered the Consuls for the year 61, Marcus Pupius Piso and Marcus Valerius Messala, to propose a law fixing the procedure to be adopted and establishing a special tribunal to judge the case.* To propose an extraordinary tribunal at a moment when the popular party was protesting daily against the illegal condemnation of the accomplices of Catiline was a deliberate provocation; and the Democrats immediately took Clodius under their protection. A violent agitation broke out against the Bill, largely fomented by a Tribune of obscure antecedents, named Quintus Fufius Calenus, who was anxious to obtain notoriety. The Conservatives remained firm in their demand for the condemnation of the sacrilege. Thus by the beginning of 61 the foolish adventure of Clodius had caused the outbreak of a regular political tempest, from which the most eminent men found it impossible to find shelter. 61 B.C.

Attitude of Pompey.

Cæsar, who was just about to go as pro-Prætor to Spain, was forced to delay his departure, and took prompt advantage of the scandal to divorce Pompeia, whose aristocratic connections were rather embarrassing than useful now that he was in open war with the aristocratic party. Pompey was of course appealed to by both parties; after resisting as long as he could, he was finally forced into a declaration which in its ambiguity seemed more favourable to the Conservatives than to the Democrats.

Cicero, Clodia and Terentia.

Even Cicero could not keep aloof. He was indeed carried far further than he wished by a curious intrigue undertaken by Clodius. Anxious to make sure of his support, Clodius attempted to entangle him through the second of his sisters, the wife of Quintus Metellus Celer,† a woman of the most evil reputation, who was said to have bought a garden on the banks of the Tiber at the place where the young men bathed, and to keep open house for all the worst of the Roman nobility. But Cicero's wife, the suspicious and shrewish Terentia, was on the look-out; and the "Father of his Country" only recovered his customary portion of household peace by pledging himself to work for the passing of the judicial bill directed against Clodius.‡ Clodius was furious at his failure; he broke out in violent invectives against Cicero for his conduct with regard to Catiline, and, with a malicious allusion to the declarations made by Cicero in the Senate, fixed upon him the nickname of the "all-knowing" Consul.§

* Cic., A. xiv. 2.
† *Id.*, i. 14, 2.
‡ Plut., Cic., 29.
§ Cic., A., i. 14, 5.

61 B.C. These attacks came at an awkward moment; for Cicero had just now other reasons for anxiety and chagrin. Antonius was sending him no money; worse still, since he had failed in an expedition against the Dardani, public opinion at Rome was clamouring for his recall, and Cicero was forced to intervene to keep him in command.* But rumours had got abroad of Cicero's agreement with his colleague, and the popular party began to make him their target. It was said that the knights had paid him to have the accomplices of Catiline condemned. He was already smarting under these stings when the attacks of Clodius came to increase his discomfort, and worried him at last, in a longing for retaliation, to plunge imprudently into the midst of the fray. The bill was thus approved with modifications favourable to Clodius, proposed by Calenus. The next step was the trial itself. Crassus, now more easy in his mind, was ready to re-enter the world of intrigue and consented, at the instigation of Cæsar, to disburse enough money to corrupt the judges; while the Conservatives on their side were preparing the most damning evidence against Clodius. When the trial took place Clodius impudently denied that he had been present at the festival of the Bona Dea at all. The man who had been surprised there must have been some one else, for he had not even been at Rome that day. Cæsar was examined as a witness and declared that he knew nothing.† Lucullus came forward to testify to the incestuous union of Clodia with her brother.‡ But it was Cicero who gave the crowning evidence by declaring that Clodius had been at Rome on that very day and had come to see him three hours before the sacrilege.§ Every one believed his condemnation to be inevitable, but the gold of Crassus was more decisive than any evidence, and to the jubilation of the Democrats and the confusion of the Conservatives, Clodius was actually acquitted.

Evidence of Cicero and acquittal of Clodius.

Cæsar and his creditors. The Conservatives now sought to turn the tables upon Cæsar, who was making his arrangements to leave for Spain. Several of his creditors, suborned by his political enemies, produced a bundle of old unpaid *syngraphæ*, or bills of exchange, and threatened in default of payment to confiscate the pile of baggage which Cæsar, like most governors, was taking out with him to his province. These threats must certainly have been due to some political intrigue, for his creditors would

* Cic., A., i. 12, 13, 14; F. v. 5 and 6. † Plut., Cæs., 10.
‡ Cic., Pro Mil., xxvii. 73. See Drümann, G. R., ii. 382 n. 67.
§ Val. Max., viii. 5, 5; Cic., A., i. 16, 4.

scarcely have been so foolish as to keep Cæsar at Rome at the very moment when he was going into the province to enrich himself. Cæsar again addressed himself to Crassus, who offered a guarantee which the creditors did not venture to dispute. Thus released from his obligations Cæsar set out for Spain.* 61 B.C.

He left behind him at Rome Pompey, busy in the preparations for his triumph, Lucullus, now living quietly in retirement, and Cicero, since his defeat in the trial of Clodius a prey to gathering anxieties. Stimulated by Clodius the Democrats were once more taking up the whole Catilinarian affair, throwing doubts upon Cicero's good faith and declaring that on the famous December 5, Roman citizens had not so much been judged as assassinated. If only he had been compensated for this ingratitude by some sufficient admiration from the other side, he would not have been so grieved. But many of the people who had admired and applauded him during the crisis had now fallen under the spell of the agitators, and were beginning to ask if Cicero had not exaggerated the danger. He was at a loss where to turn. Too honest and, to speak truth, too vain to turn his back upon his own achievements in order to satisfy his critics, he yet lacked both the courage and the energy necessary to attach himself wholeheartedly to the extreme Conservatives. Disillusionment of Cicero.

For the moment, however, all was quiet; nor was the quiet even disturbed by an embassy which reached Rome from Gaul just about this time. The peoples of Gaul had now for some years been convulsed by an endless series of internal dissensions and disastrous wars. During the course of one of these wars, a short time before, one of the most powerful of the Gallic tribes, the Sequani, had called to their aid from beyond the Rhine a German chieftain, Ariovistus, who with his Suevian tribesmen had helped to conquer the Ædui. The Ædui, who had been in alliance with Rome since the conquest of the Narbonese Province, sent the Druid Divitiacus to Rome to appeal for assistance. Cicero now entertained him in his house;† but despite the hospitality of the ex-Consul Divitiacus did not succeed in arousing Rome out of the complacent indifference with which she had treated the affairs of Gaul for the last sixty years. The Senate escaped from the difficulty by decreeing that the Governor of the Province, The Æduan decree.

* Plut., Cæs., 11; App., B. C., ii. 8.
† Cic., De Div., i. xli, 90.

61 B.C. who as a matter of fact had very small forces at his disposal, was to protect the Ædui against any attempt of their enemies.* Thus the Gallic question soon passed once more out of the public mind.

Lucretius. There was now a slight lull in the storm of politics. Generals and statesmen may make way for a moment for a greater representative of the spirit of their age—no soldier, nor demagogue in the public eye, but an obscure man of letters, a friend of Cicero, who, unknown and unregarded in a sequestered corner of Rome, was labouring at the most daring and characteristic monument of her imperial literature. His name was Titus

His life and character. Lucretius Carus. He was a man most probably of independent means who lived in a small house in the metropolis on the income derived from his landed property. A victim of a terrible malady, described by alienists as alternating or circular delirium, which consists in a succession of violent fits of exaltation followed by periods of sullen and morose depression,† he had withdrawn from politics to devote himself wholly to study. He lived in the midst of his books, with a few friends among the upper classes, but without ambition or desire for wealth. All his pleasure lay in the contemplation of the infinite world which Epicurus had opened to his gaze, a world flooded through and through with a rain of atoms, alight with countless stars and peopled with countless worlds, maintaining its equipoise by a gigantic effort of vitality in which Rome and her Empire were but one tiny eddy, lost in the immense and moving ocean of eternity.

His poem. But Lucretius was no idle dilettante who had fled from the violence and passions of mankind to distract an overladen brain with the selfish pastimes of the intellect. He was an ardent worker, an untiring craftsman of the imagination, who in the solitude of his study showed an ambition as insatiable as Lucullus himself in the thickest of the fight. Amid the painful and perpetual struggle with his disease he was conceiving a great poem upon Nature, bidding his contemporaries depose from their heavenly thrones the false gods whom they had too long worshipped, and attempting single-handed to win, not a new province with an army of soldiers, but rather, with

* Cæs., B. G., i. 35.

† S. Hieron, ad Ann., 660 U.C. Stampini, *Il suicidio di Lucrezio*, in R. S. A. i, part 4, p. 45, has shown the credibility of the details given by St. Jerome, which he derived from Suetonius. See also Giri, *Il suicidio di Lucrezio*, Palermo, 1895.

a Titanic aspiration of the intellect, the lordship and comprehension of the natural world. 61 B.C.

His language and philosophy.

But in the travail of self-expression the master of thought became a master of language; for he was the first to mould Latin to the uses of poetry. At the time when Lucretius began to write, the speech of the peasants of Latium was still primitive and confused, ill-fitted for abstract thinking, and its versification rude and imperfect; but, as Lucullus, with but 30,000 ignorant Italians, had set forth to trample down the Empires of the East, so Lucretius dared to do violence to those massive accents which men had thought destined for uses no more noble or enduring than the enactments of legislators, the reckonings of merchants, and the disputes of politicians. Lucretius took the language of his fathers, softened and purified it in the fire of his enthusiasm, hammered it long and patiently on the anvil of his thought, till it had lost all the dullness and opacity of its origin; he took the rough metres of the older poets, shaped and re-shaped them with vigorous workmanship till they rang clear and true in the stirring rhythm of his sonorous hexameter lines; and this instrument of language thus laboriously formed he applied to express, no metrical and meaningless analysis of an abstract doctrine, but his own deep-felt and romantic philosophy of the universe. He gave vivid utterance to the intensest exaltation, the most voluptuous abandonment, that the mind of man has ever felt before the everlasting and everchanging spectacle of the life of the Universe. He projected upon the infinite background of Nature the light and the shadows, the joy and the despair which came and went in his own vexed and fitful spirit. He depicted in the colour and radiance of reality all the tender and terrible incidents of existence, the smiles that wreathe green meadows in the spring-time after rain, the gambolings of animals at pasture, the rushings of mighty tempests over field and forest, the great floods and rushings of rivers, the calms and storms on the high seas, the puny efforts of man still in the animal stage to preserve and to beautify his precarious existence, the horrors of plague and war, the folly of the fear of death, the burning thirst for love among all living creatures, the eternity and identity of the life which pulsates through the universe in all the myriad and mutable forces of animal being. The exposition of the philosophy of Epicurus binds together the detached and broken masses of his thought into the living unity of a single great poem, a solemn and indeed almost a religious

61 B.C. book, not the most perfect but the most powerful achievement in the literature of Rome, in which posterity should recognise, not the caprice or the miracle of a solitary thinker lost in the wilderness of an imperial metropolis, but one of those manifold efforts to win power and knowledge and the heights of human greatness essayed by the men of that giant generation in the world of action and the world of thought. He stands for the heroic upward struggle of a reason which, in the sacred cause of truth, crushes indignantly beneath its feet the paltry superstitions of authority and religion. There are few greater gifts which Rome has bestowed upon mankind than the *De Natura* of Lucretius, which, little regarded among the men amongst whom it was written, has found its way across the ages, while the trophies, the monuments and the glory of so many of Rome's generals have perished in the gulf of time.

CHAPTER XVII

THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER

Cæsar's governorship in Spain—Pompey's triumph—Renewal of disorder at Rome—The pensioning of the veterans—The abolition of the customs—The Directors of the Tax-farming Syndicate of Asia demand a reduction of the contract—Pompey's disillusion—Cicero and the capitalists—He publishes the history of his Consulship—His revelations about Crassus—The disturbances in Gaul—Cæsar stands for the Consulship, and is elected—His preparations for his Consulship—He Cicero reconciles Pompey and Crassus, and attempts to win over—His design of restoring the Democratic Party of 70—Secret coalition with Pompey and Crassus—First actions as Consul—Establishes a daily journal at Rome—The Land Bill—Obstruction of the Conservatives—Revelation of the coalition—Sudden change in Cæsar's policy—Cæsar succeeds in reducing the Asiatic contract, and is paid for it in shares—The five years' governorship of Cisalpine Gaul—Supremacy of the coalition of Pompey, Crassus and Cæsar—Vain rage of the Conservatives—Disgust of Cicero—Political powerlessness of the upper classes—Its causes—Catullus and his loves—His poetry—Catullus and the revolutionary party of Cæsar—Measures taken by Cæsar to consolidate his power—Alliance with Clodius—Clodius, Cicero and Pompey—The plot of Vettius—The elections for 58—The government of the Narbonese Province—Laws of Clodius—The Tammany Hall of Rome—Exile of Cicero—Cicero and Cato leave Italy.

Cæsar in Spain.

AFTER the narrow escape from his creditors on the eve of departure, Cæsar was doubly sensible of the necessity of repairing the family fortunes. No sooner had he arrived in Spain than he devoted himself systematically to the amassing of money. After recruiting ten new cohorts and adding them to the twenty already in the province, he undertook expeditions against the Callæci and the Lusitanians, and was merciless in sacking their villages even when they were ready to offer him allegiance.* As the province was burdened with debts contracted with Italian capitalists during the war with Sertorius,

* App., B. C., ii. 8; Dion, xxxvii. 52–53; Suet., Cæs., 54; Plut., Cæs., 12.

61 B.C. he applied the Catilinarian remedy of a diminution of interest, and was paid huge sums by the cities in compensation.*

Pompey's triumph: first day.

At Rome Pompey had succeeded in securing his general Lucius Afranius as Consul for the year 60 with Quintus Metellus Celer, brother-in-law of Clodius, for a colleague. He was still putting off his triumph to await the arrival of his Asiatic spoils. At the end of September all was ready, and on the 29th the procession set forth on the Appian Way. It was preceded by two great placards giving a full account of Pompey's achievements and proclaiming that by the tribute from the new provinces he had raised the revenue of the Republic from fifty to eighty million drachmæ. Behind these placards came an interminable procession of waggons filled with armour and helmets and the prows of pirate ships. Then came mules [£2,500,000.] bearing the money treasure, some sixty million drachmæ, which the conqueror was paying into the treasury of the State. Then followed a marvellous collection of jewels belonging to Mithridates, carefully exhibited for the public gaze. Then, each on a special vehicle, all the most valuable objects he had brought home—a playing table composed entirely of two enormous precious stones, three magnificent beds, a couch of massive gold given by the King of the Iberians, thirty-five bands of pearls, three colossal gold statues of Minerva, Mars and Apollo, a miniature temple of the Muses covered with gems and surmounted by a timepiece, a bed in which Darius, son of Hystaspes, had once slept, the throne and sceptre of Mithridates, his statue in silver, a bust of Pompey in pearls by a skilful Oriental artist, and a collection of strange tropical plants, amongst others the ebony. For hours and hours the treasures of the last Hellenistic monarch of Asia wound through the narrow streets of Rome, before the eyes of a huge and excited crowd which cheerfully faced the sun, the dust, the noise and the long waits of the huge procession, seemed never to grow tired of staring at the show, and kept up a running fire of applause or criticism at each strange and wonderful object as it passed, while the eyes of the women brightened at the magnificent jewellery which they saw set out.

Second day.

But this was only a first instalment. On the following day, which happened to be Pompey's birthday, came the turn of the living. First walked large groups of prisoners from all countries, from the pirates to the Arabs and Jews, all at liberty

* Plut., Cæs., 12; Suet., Cæs., 54.

and unchained—a picturesque ethnographical display of the immense variety of nations over which Rome had extended her Empire. Then followed a crowd of princes and hostages, two celebrated pirate chiefs, the son of Tigranes, who had quarrelled with Pompey and had been deprived of his principality of Sophene, seven sons of Mithridates, Aristobulus with a son and two daughters, and numerous Iberian and Albanian chieftains. Then came hugé pictures depicting important episodes in the campaign, such as the flight of Tigranes and the death of Mithridates; then strange idols worshipped by the barbarians. Last of all came the lord of the triumph himself, on a chariot decorated with pearls. He was clothed in a tunic said to have been worn by Alexander the Great, and followed by a glittering escort of commanders and tribunes on foot and on horse-back.* But the strangest sight of the day, and that which gave the Italians the most lively sense of being in truth the first among the nations, was when, at the end of the long progress through the streets, the hero of the triumph, who claimed to have extended the limits of Empire to the further end of the world, put off the garb of Alexander and modestly retired, a simple citizen, to the house of his fathers. 61 B.C.

Not long after the festival, towards the end of the year 61, and in the early months of 60, discord broke out anew. Pompey was still desirous of a reconciliation with the Conservatives, and with this object he had asked Cato, according to one account for his two nieces, according to another for his two daughters, to marry the one and give the other to his eldest son.† Cæsar's fortunes had never been in greater danger. But Cato, the uncompromising reactionary, gave a curt refusal. He did not care to see politics brought into family life, nor did he trust the conversion of a man who had already once deserted the Conservative side. None of the extreme reactionaries were in the mood to forgive Pompey, and now that he had disarmed himself by dismissing his troops, their thoughts were only of vengeance. They replied to all Pompey's advances by insulting attacks. When he asked the Senate to ratify the arrangements he had made in the East, he found numerous

Pompey's trouble with the Senate.

* The details of this description are taken from App., Mithr., 116–117; Pliny, N. H., xxxvii., 2, 16, and Plut., Pomp. 45. These writers are not in agreement as to the sum paid in to the Treasury by Pompey. Plutarch gives the highest figure, 20,000 talents, in which he includes the value of the gold and silver objects. Pliny gives a sum of 200 million sesterces. I have chosen the estimate of Appian, which falls between the two.

† Plut., Cat. U., 30.

60 B.C. Senators against him. Crassus and Lucullus opposed him out of spite, Cato and the Conservatives, in order to destroy the credit he had gained with the Eastern monarchs, and also perhaps to endanger his chances of recovering the huge sums he had lent them.*

The abolition of Custom dues and the pension scheme for veterans.

Another serious subject of dispute arose with regard to the disposal of the new provincial revenues. Pompey made the very reasonable proposal of distributing part of them among his soldiers by buying land for them in Italy, and spending the rest on Italy as a whole by abolishing all import duties. The disbandment of troops which Pompey had just made was, next to Sulla's, the largest that had ever taken place since soldiering had become a profession for the poor. Since many of the troops, in spite of their twenty or twenty-five years in the East, had not succeeded in saving up enough money for their old age, it was necessary to provide them with pensions by the assignment of land on which to build themselves a cottage out of their savings, buy a few slaves and attempt to make a living by agriculture. The abolition of import duties was generally desired by the whole of Italy, for the consumption of wine, perfumery, furniture, dyes, stuffs and artistic work of all sorts from the East was steadily growing, even in towns of secondary importance, many of which were increasing greatly in prosperity. If the frontiers of Italy were thrown open, not only would Eastern imports be cheaper, but there would be an end of the interminable disputes with the financiers who farmed the taxes.†

The Asiatic tax-farmers clamour for a new contract.

Pompey at once took steps to carry out these projects. It was at his instigation that the Tribune Lucius Flavius now proposed a Land Bill, and Metellus Nepos a bill abolishing import duties in Italy upon imported products. Unfortunately the sudden increase of revenue had, as usual, whetted too many appetites. The Conservatives were anxious that the new funds should remain at the disposition of the Senate to increase the sums assigned to the provincial Governorships and other branches of the public service in which Senators found a living. The powerful company which had contracted for the taxes

* Dion, xxxvii., 49. App., B. C. ii. 9.

† Cæs., B. C. iii., 31, 2; iii., 32, 6, and Dion, xxxix., 59, prove the existence of syndicates of tax-farmers in Syria at the time of the civil war and a few years before. It seems probable that these syndicates were formed at this time, immediately after the annexation. I believe it to be to these societies that Cicero is alluding (A., i. 19, 4), when he speaks of the "adventicia pecunia . . . quæ ex novis vectigalibus per quinquennium reciperetur."

of Asia seized the opportunity to petition the Senate, with the assistance of Crassus, who was probably a shareholder, for the reduction of their contract prices, urging that it had offered too high a figure and stood to lose upon the transaction.* The result was a long-drawn series of political squabbles which finally succeeded in driving Pompey off his balance and shattering the already weakened nerves of Cicero. 60 B.C.

Pompey, who had come to Rome sated with success and with the sole intention of basking in the sunshine of renown and riches, now found himself entangled in a miserable network of intrigues, which were all the more aggravating because, in spite of his affectation of contempt for his enemies, he was quite unsuccessful in defeating them. Cicero, disgusted at the Conservatives, disquieted by the growing violence of the demagogues, and distressed above measure at his own rapid loss of prestige, endeavoured to disarm the hostility of the tax-farmers by undertaking their defence in the Senate. He confided however to Atticus in a private letter, that he thought their cupidity outrageous. He was anxious too to draw near to Pompey, though he had not the courage to take the necessary steps. He told Atticus in self-defence that he had hopes of converting the chief of the popular party.† He had at length completed and published the Greek history of his Consulate,‡ but not without a serious mishap. In order to prove that he was not lightly influenced by vague reports, and to shield himself, though without saying so, from the accusations of Clodius, he mentioned in the book that Crassus had one evening brought him a bundle of informers' letters against Catiline. Crassus, who had recovered from his alarm and was once more angling for popularity, was furious at a revelation which placed him among the number of the persecutors of Catiline. So Cicero had succeeded in making another enemy.§

Cicero and the capitalists.

The history of his Consulate.

Meanwhile, apart from the question of the abolition of the import duties,‖ the numerous discussions which had taken place in the Forum and the Senate had led to no result of importance. Neither Pompey's general administration in the East nor the Land Bill, nor the reduction of the Asiatic contract, had yet been ratified. To crown all, there now suddenly arrived very alarming news from Gaul. The spectre

The German peril in Gaul.

* Cic., A., i. 17, 9.
† *Id.*, i. 17, 10; i. 19, 7; ii. 1, 6.
‡ *Id.*, i. 19, 10.
§ Plut., Crass., 13.
‖ Dion, xxxvii. 51.

60 B.C. of a new German invasion suddenly loomed up again on the horizon. It was reported that the Helvetii, one of the most warlike peoples in Gaul, who had taken part in the invasion of the Cimbri and Teutones, were preparing to leave their mountains and to invade and subdue Gaul; they were said to be aiming at the establishment of a great Celtic Empire beneath their military hegemony, and to be looking about for allies to support them in their enterprise.* It was generally agreed that if the Helvetii succeeded in conquering Gaul, they would at once hurl their forces upon Italy. This alarming intelligence finally dispelled the easy confidence which it had been customary to preserve on Gallic affairs. All other questions were ruled out of court and the Senate decided that the two Consuls should draw lots for the two Gallic provinces, the Cisalpine and the Narbonese, that a levy should immediately be made, that all exceptions from military service should be suspended, and finally that three ambassadors should be sent to Gaul to study the situation on the spot.† One group of politicians, headed by the Consul Metellus,‡ went still further. They proposed to declare war at once upon the Helvetii to crush them before they left their own country. The imperialist spirit which had been so lively at Rome since the conquests of Lucullus and Pompey snatched at every opportunity that arose; and all over Italy there were ruined nobles and ambitious adventurers only thirsting for an opportunity to win glory and plunder. Since the interminable discussions on Pompey's administration closed the East just now to Roman enterprise, the opportunity afforded by a war in Gaul was not lightly to be dismissed.

Cæsar elected Consul.

Meanwhile, towards the middle of the year 60, Cæsar hurriedly returned from Spain to contest the Consulship for 59. There were this year three candidates for the Consulship: Cæsar, a dilettante historian called Lucius Lucceius, who had lived long in Egypt and was exceedingly wealthy, and Marcus Bibulus, a reactionary Conservative, who had already been Cæsar's colleague both as Ædile and Prætor. Lucceius, who belonged to neither party and was merely anxious to be elected for the honour of the position, was appealed to by both candidates in the hope that he would defray their election expenses. But the popular demagogue was more persuasive than the

* Cic. de Div., ii., xli., 90; A., i., 19, 2.
† *Id.*, A., i. 19, 2–4.
‡ Cic., A., i. 20, 5. See Appendix D.

nominee of the reactionaries, and Bibulus was obliged to have recourse to his own friends, who raised a subscription for his expenses.* Even Cato consented for once to subscribe, in his apprehension as to what the Consulship of a Cæsar might bring forth. Cæsar and Bibulus were elected, and the unfortunate millionaire who had paid the expenses was left in the lurch. As a set off against this election, the Conservatives induced the Senate to decide that the pro-Consular duty of the two Consuls for 59 should consist in the overseeing of roads and forests, an administrative position of quite secondary importance. By this ludicrous strategem the Senate thought to guard itself beforehand against the design which was commonly attributed to Cæsar of applying in some new corner of the world the political methods of Lucullus and Pompey.† 60 B.C.

Cæsar's possible ambitions.

As to what Cæsar's schemes at this moment precisely were we have no information. Three great enterprises still lay open at this time to Roman policy—the annexation of Egypt, the invasion of Parthia, and the extension of the Roman dominion in Europe towards the Danube and the Rhine. In spite of the imminence of a Gallic war at this moment, Cæsar could hardly be thinking of any enterprise in that country: for Cisalpine Gaul had fallen to Metellus Celer, who was just arranging to leave Rome for his army.‡

The Democrats and Ptolemy.

Nor can Cæsar be credited with harbouring any designs upon Egypt. The Democratic party had abandoned the schemes it had entertained in 65 and was now showing a greater zeal even than the Senate for the preservation of Egyptian independence. It was Ptolemy Auletes who had brought about this miraculous conversion. No longer hoping for any assistance from Pompey, he had conceived the daring design of wringing out of the very politicians who a few years before had tried to rob him of his kingdom that recognition of his authority which the Senate still hesitated to grant him. He was engaged in negotiations with Crassus, Pompey and Cæsar and had promised them an enormous sum—6000 talents—if they secured his recognition by Rome as a legitimate sovereign.

* Cic., A., i. 17, 11; Suet., Cæs., 19.

† Suet., Cæs., 19. I here follow Suetonius, and not Dion, xxxvii. 54; Plut., Cæs., 13; Pomp., 47; Crass., 14, and App., B. C., ii. 9, who place the reconciliation of Crassus and Pompey through Cæsar *before* the elections. This seems to me unlikely, for Cæsar, who only arrived in Rome shortly before the election, could not have had time to undertake the lengthy intrigues preliminary to the reconciliation.

‡ Cic., A., i. 20, 5.

60 B.C. It is the most likely solution therefore, though it is a conjecture unsupported by evidence, that Cæsar was already at this time dreaming of the conquest of Parthia, which Lucullus had designed but been forced to abandon. Since then it had fallen to Pompey to undertake it; and though both Pompey and Lucullus had turned back upon the frontier, the idea that it was Rome's destiny to conquer the great Parthian Empire was already widespread. A confirmation of this conjecture may be found in the emphasis with which, four years afterwards, Cæsar urged Crassus to this very undertaking.

Cæsar and Parthia.

Cæsar and the old Moderate Democratic party.

But these were dreams in the far distance; and, just now present troubles were sufficiently pressing. The petty manœuvre of the Senate was a warning to the Consul designate to entertain no illusions on the attitude of his opponents. Cæsar at once made preparations for the struggle; but he acted in the style which his enemies least expected. While the Conservatives were on the look-out for a year of turbulence, Cæsar was gradually returning to those moderate ideas which were more in harmony with his character, his social position and his interests. His scheme for fighting the Conservative party was a very simple one. He intended to reorganise the moderate and reforming Democratic party of the year 70, which had enlisted the support both of the upper and middle classes. Enfeebled by events and by the blunders of its leaders, this party had been finally dispersed by the conspiracy of Catiline. But it could easily be brought together again if only its more powerful chiefs could be induced to join hands: if only, that is, a coalition could be formed between Crassus, Pompey and Cicero.

Negotiations for the new party.

It was a difficult undertaking, but it was far from impossible. Pompey needed the ratification of his administration in the East; Crassus, discredited among the Conservatives by his Egyptian project and among the Democrats by his ambiguous attitude during the conspiracy, was anxious to recover his old popularity. As for Cicero, all he wished was to efface the impression of the condemnation of the Catilinarians. During the months which he spent at Rome as Consul designate, Cæsar manœuvred so adroitly that he succeeded in breaking down the old hostility between Pompey and Crassus. The reconciliation was of course still kept secret; neither of the three wished it to become publicly known, lest their enemies, who were still powerful, should be frightened into fresh energy.*

* Dion, 42, 58.

At the same time, Publius Cornelius Balbus, a Spaniard from Cadiz, whom Pompey had made a Roman citizen, and who was a friend of several important personages at Rome, was entrusted with the task of negotiating with Cicero and suggesting an alliance with Crassus and Pompey. 60 B.C. [Cades.]

The scheme for the coalition thus gradually took shape. By taking up a conciliatory attitude and securing the support of Cicero, Crassus and Pompey, Cæsar hoped to bring over to his side those moderate Senators, actually a majority in that body, who had ever since the conspiracy of Catiline voted in blind terror for the small group of extreme Conservatives. He hoped to bring matters back to the good old days of the year 70 and to have public affairs again transacted by a coalition of four. Had not the great battles of those days against the Conservative cabal been won in the Senate, the Assembly and the Forum by the joint action of Pompey, Crassus, Cicero and himself? Cicero was exceedingly flattered by the offer: but he had fallen into a morbid and vacillating state and could not be persuaded into answering either yes or no.* Disappointing as this was, it did not interfere with the project as a whole. Even without Cicero the coalition of Crassus and Pompey would be sufficient to reconstitute the party, and it was Cæsar himself who would gain all the advantages of the arrangement. Not only would he secure an important pro-Consular command but he would use his office to gain himself a fortune. It was as impossible then, as it is nowadays, to play a prominent political part without considerable expenditure. On his return from Spain, Cæsar had given nothing to his creditors, or at least to those among them who did not make his life a burden; he continued to owe a large sum to Atticus and also to be in the debt of Pompey.† He now therefore

Cicero decides to stand out.

* Cic., A., ii. 3, 3. The attempts made to win over Cicero are, to my mind, the decisive proof that Cæsar's first design was to reconstitute the constitutional Democratic party of 70. In this case, the moderation displayed by Cæsar at the beginning of his Consulship was not a mask, as supposed by Appian, B. C., ii. 10. What use would hypocrisy have been to Cæsar if he had already decided on the revolutionary policy that he adopted during his Consulship? That policy was the result, as we shall see, of a sudden change of ideas and programme. Nor is it probable that Pompey and Crassus would have joined the coalition if they had known that Cæsar's Consulship would end as it did.

† A passage of Cicero (A., vi. 1, 25), shows us that in 50 Atticus and Pompey were among Cæsar's creditors. These debts must have been contracted previous to his Consulship, for it is hardly likely that the Proconsul of Gaul would have borrowed 50 talents from Atticus.

60 B.C. accepted the extremely favourable advances of Ptolemy Auletes and further promised during his Consulship to effect a diminution of the contract of the company which farmed the taxes of Asia. The directors were pledged, in exchange, to give him a large number of shares in the company.*

Ariovistus proposes an alliance.

While Cæsar was making these preparations for his Consulship, there was a curious development in the Gallic situation. If the sensation caused by the first news about the Helvetii had slightly worn off, Metellus was continuing his preparation with undiminished activity. But in the midst of his arrangements he had been surprised and embarrassed by a very singular proposal. Profiting by the anxiety felt at Rome about the Helvetii, Ariovistus, King of the Suevi, proposed himself to Rome as an ally; he offered, that is, if occasion arose, to fight on the side of the Romans against the new Cimbri and Teutones. Ariovistus was the enemy of the Ædui, the old allies of Rome, in whose favour the Senate had passed an important decree only the year before. If Rome accepted the alliance of Ariovistus, she would be cancelling this Æduan decree, which had been specially directed against the King of the Suevi, and would be declaring herself the Friend and Ally of two peoples hostile to one another, a situation which might some day give rise to serious complications. Nevertheless the offer of Ariovistus was very tempting. The help of the Suevi, the most warlike people in Gaul, might prove exceedingly useful in a war against the Helvetii. There was therefore a party in Rome favourable to the alliance with the Suevi and anxious to sacrifice the Ædui and the original object of the alliance with them to the necessity of preventing a possible coalition between Ariovistus and the Helvetii. Moreover Ariovistus for his part seemed very anxious for the Roman alliance and made large presents to Metellus, who seems to have been doubtful about entertaining the offer.†

Cæsar's first speech as Consul.

In the midst of these preparations and vicissitudes the year 60 expired and Cæsar became Consul. He had at length

* We know of this intrigue from brief allusions in Cic., in Vat., xii. 29. Cicero says that in 59 Vatinius extorted from Cæsar and the tax-farmers "*partes carissimas*," *i.e.*, shares in the Asiatic company which had had its contract reduced. It is clear that the financiers must have given Vatinius the shares for his trouble in securing the passing of the reduction. It is, therefore almost certain that Cæsar's shares, which he passed on to Vatinius in payment for certain services, were also given him in return for services rendered, by the directors of the company.

† Pliny, N., H. ii. 67, 170. See Appendix D.

attained the supreme ambition of the political career of every Roman. No sooner had he entered upon his office than he made a speech in the Senate protesting his anxiety to act on every occasion in agreement with Bibulus, and he took several opportunities of testifying to his respect for his colleague.* 60 B.C.

He also made an administrative reform which must have pleased the middle class and for which Cæsar deserves a small place in the history of journalism. It was he who originated at Rome what we should describe in modern language as a popular newspaper. With the increase of wealth and education curiosity had very naturally kept pace, and there were people in Rome who sought to gain a living by doing something analagous to the modern journalist. They collected what they considered to be the most important and interesting public and private information of the day, and at regular intervals every few days they collected it into a small handbook and had it copied several times by a slave, distributing the copies to subscribers.† Naturally this was a luxury which only the rich could afford. Cæsar seems to have passed a decree that one of the magistrates should be entrusted with the duty of causing a *resumé* of all the most important news to be inscribed on whitewashed walls in different parts of the city, with the arrangement that when the news was stale, the wall should be whitewashed again for other news to take its place.‡ In this way even the poorest of the people could be kept informed about all that went on. Cæsar also arranged that reports of sittings of the Senate should be made in a more regular manner and put at the disposition of the public.§ Cæsar's place in journalism.

Thinking that he had paved the way for more extended action, Cæsar now put forward a Land Bill. It enacted that twenty commissioners should be entrusted with the duty of distributing to the veterans and the poor all that remained of the public land with the exception of Campania, with the addition of other land to be bought on reasonable terms with the money brought in by Pompey.‖ This was both a wise and a moderate proposal,¶ and on presenting it to the Senate Cæsar's first Land Bill.

* App., B. C., ii. 10; Dion, xxxviii. 1.

† See Daremberg and Saglio, D. A., i. 50. Huebner, *de senatus populique Romani actis*, Lipsiæ, 1860; E. Caetani Lovatelli, *I giornali dei Romani* in the *Nuova Antologia*, Nov. 1, 1901. Also Cic., F. viii. 1, 1; viii. 2, 2; viii. 11, 14; Suet., Cæs., 20.

‡ Daremberg and Saglio, D. A., i. 50.

§ *Id.*, D. A., i. 51. See Suet., Cæs., 20. ‖ Dion, xxxviii. 1.

¶ I believe that Cæsar proposed two Land Bills at some months distance. The decisive passages are Cic., A., ii. 16, 1, 2; ii. 18, 2.

59 B.C. Cæsar declared that he was ready to listen to any objections that might be offered. But he was very soon deceived in his hopes of a return to the Democratic victories of the year 70. Times and tempers had changed too much in the interval. The ominous conjunction of the words Cæsar and Land Bill was too much for the reactionaries; and the landlords, who were strongly represented in the Senate, particularly those who were in possession of land bought during the proscriptions of Sulla, were much dismayed at a bill which put into the hands of twenty commissioners a power which it would be easy to abuse. The Conservatives thus easily succeeded, under one pretext and another, in postponing the discussion of the Bill in the weak and irresolute Senate.*

The Triumvirate revealed.

Cæsar was patient for some time, while Calenus, who was Prætor, and Publius Vatinius, an obscure political adventurer who was Tribune, proposed reforms in the law regulating the courts.† At length seeing that neither Crassus nor himself would be successful in securing that the Bill should be discussed by the Senate, Cæsar declared that he would simply have it proposed to the electors.‡ This caused a great sensation. With the assistance of Cato and the Conservatives, Bibulus entered into a violent campaign of obstruction on religious grounds to prevent the meeting of the people.§ Cæsar's patience broke down, and he began to work upon the feelings of his supporters. Finally, after doing all he could to win Bibulus to his side, he played his trump card. He appealed openly to Crassus and Pompey for their help. Crassus and Pompey came down to the Forum and declared that the factious obstruction of the Conservatives must be broken down by force if persuasion proved insufficient.‖ On this the Bill was approved amidst a scene of tumultuous excitement. A clause added at the last moment forced the Senators to swear that they would faithfully observe it.

Effect of the revelation.

But this success was as nothing in comparison with the effect produced upon the public when it became known that the three powerful personages whom every one had thought to be enemies had all the while been acting in concert. It was the struggle between Crassus and Pompey which, in spite of rebuff

See Suet., Cæs., 20; Plut., Cat., U., 32, 33; App., B. C., ii. 10; Dion, xxxviii. 1; Napoleon III., J. C., i. 381 n. 2. Lange, R. A., iii. 279.

* Dion, xxxviii. 2.

† Lange, R. A., iii. 275.

‡ Dion, xxxviii. 3.

§ *Id.*, xxxviii., 6; App., B. C., ii. 11.

‖ App., B. C., ii. 10; Plut., Pomp., 47; Cæs., 14.

after rebuff and scandal after scandal, had made it possible for the reactionaries to remain in power so long; and the quarrel between the two men was so bitter and of such long standing that the world had come to regard it as permanent. Now, suddenly, and almost by miracle, the two enemies were seen to be sworn allies: and both came forward in the cause of Cæsar, the redoubtable leader of all the rabble in Rome. The discovery caused an immense sensation. It was evident that if Pompey, Crassus and Cæsar united their forces, they could do what they liked with the electors, and that henceforward without their consent it would be well-nigh impossible to obtain either an office or a command or a mission or a loan. The majority of the Senators thought only of office, money and influence. As usual, therefore, they took sides with the big battalions and hastily trooped away from the small faction of reactionary Conservatives, who had rallied, since the death of Catulus, round the standard of Cato. 59 B.C.

Cæsar's change of policy.

When the body has prepared itself for an effort far out of proportion to the obstacle to be encountered, it is apt to lose its equilibrium; and the same law holds good of the action of character. This was curiously exemplified by Cæsar's behaviour at this juncture. If Cæsar's was a nature naturally prone to moderation, he was yet quick to catch fire from the influence of the moment, and he could hardly escape being inflamed by the political society around him—a society from which all the reasonable spirits were being gradually withdrawn, and where, from Cato to Clodius, from Gabinius to Bibulus, sound and fury were the powerful and predominating elements. He had begun by being cautious and respectful; but emboldened by the success of the Land Bill and by the unexpected display of his recent increase of power, and furious at the factious opposition of the Conservatives, he changed his tactics with a swiftness and agility of which only he was capable, and swung round to the idea of an unadulterated democracy. His notion was now to found at Rome a democracy similar to the democracies of Greece, which dispensed with a Senate and governed their Empires single-handed through the deliberative assembly of the people. Such a democracy, with three men distinguished for eloquence, riches and renown at its head, would be capable, as it had already shown by its settlement of the Land Bill, of dealing satisfactorily with all those questions of foreign policy and finance of which the Senate had hitherto had the supreme control.

59 B.C. An unexpected event brought Cæsar's resolve to a head. Towards the middle of February, Quintus Metellus Celer died on the eve of his departure for Cisalpine Gaul. He was still so young, and his death was so unexpected, that his wife Clodia was suspected of having poisoned him.* The government of Gaul, which meant the command in the imminent war against the Helvetii, became vacant through his death. It was at this moment undoubtedly that Cæsar first entertained the idea of securing an extraordinary command in Gaul. Though he knew very little about Gallic affairs, the idea of conducting a campaign against the nation whom Italy regarded as a new German invader, could not fail to attract him. By a campaign against the Helvetii he would be following in the great tradition of his uncle and his party, and would show Italy once more that only the Democrats could defend her against the northern barbarians.

The vacancy in Gaul.

The Cisalpine governorship.

But the Senate could not be expected to sanction such an arrangement. He must appeal, as Pompey had appealed in similar case, direct to the Assembly of the people. Cæsar did not lose an instant. He gave up any other ideas of conquest which he may hitherto have entertained, and tried to spread the belief that a serious war in Gaul was perilously imminent.† Profiting by the impression created by his alliance with Crassus and Pompey, he made Vatinius propose to the people a bill entrusting him for five years with the government of Cisalpine Gaul and Illyria with three legions, dating from the date of the promulgation of the bill. In case war broke out before the end of the year, he would thus be enabled to take command at once, following the example of Lucullus. Thanks largely to the stupefaction which reigned in political circles, as well as to his own activity and the help of Crassus and Pompey, the bill was passed without difficulty and promulgated on March 1.

The reduction of the Asiatic contract.

When this stroke had gone safely home, Cæsar went on to three further projects. He persuaded the people to acknowledge Ptolemy Auletes as a friend of the Roman people,

* Cic., pro Cael., xxiv., 59.

† Lange, R. A., iii. 283, has shown the connection between the death of Metellus Celer and the law granting Cæsar the Gallic command. I believe, also, that this provides the only possible explanation why Cæsar's *imperium* dated from March 1, 59, and Narbonese Gaul was added later by the Senate. Cæsar secured the command directly after the death of Metellus to defeat the intrigues of the Conservatives; the first of March must be the date on which the law was promulgated. The other explanations of the problem are unsatisfactory.

sharing with his friends the reward which he received for his success. He persuaded them also to reduce the contract which the tax-farmers had demanded from the Senate, and to approve the Asiatic administration of Pompey.* The shares in the tax-farming company of Asia immediately rose in value.† 59 B.C.

The second Land Bill.

Cæsar thus moved from success to success. Nor did he rest content even here. Hoping to ensure the permanence of the coalition, he persuaded Pompey in April to marry his daughter Julia,‡ who was betrothed to Servilius Cæpio. Cæpio was to be consoled with a daughter of Pompey instead. Then, towards the end of April,§ Cæsar proposed a second Land Bill according to which the land in Campania from which the State drew a considerable revenue, was also to be distributed among poor citizens with families. The principal object of the measure was to impoverish the Treasury and thus to injure the Conservatives, who had repeatedly used their power in the Senate to spend public money in defence of their own interests. Its principal effect was to complete the Agrarian revolution begun by Spurius Thorius in 118 and to destroy the last vestiges of the Common Land system in Italy.

The decrees of Bibulus.

Never before had the Senate been so boldly assailed in its most ancient and revered prerogatives. In comparison with these attacks, how futile seemed the projects for which Caius Gracchus had met his death. For Cæsar now went so far as not to convene the Senate at all. He acted, and showed that he acted, as the master of the situation,‖ without any one daring to offer him a serious resistance. Futile recriminations, elaborate witticisms, a few vain and sporadic outbursts of temper—this was all that the Conservative party could set against a revolutionary Consul. Bibulus, still obstinate in his ritualistic sophistries, had declared the last meetings of the people to be null and void, and continued to emit a stream of violent decrees against Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus.

* Dion, xxxviii. 7; Appian, B. C., ii. 13; Suet., Cæs., 20.

† This is clear from Cic., in Vat., xii. 29. Partes illo tempore (in 59), carissimas.

‡ Cic., A., ii. 17, 1. App., B. C., ii. 14; Plut., Cæs., 14. It can only have been after the unexpected success of the coalition that he thought of the marriage, since the girl had already been betrothed to another. This shows clearly that his success was a surprise, and that the policy of the Consulate was not what it had been intended to be during the previous months.

§ Cic., A., ii. 16, 1.

‖ Suet., Cæs., 20.

59 B.C.

The Three-Headed Monster.

Varro had christened the alliance of Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus the Three-Headed Monster, and the jest had been successfully repeated in the aristocratic *salons*, where from morning to night the names of the three chiefs of the victorious democracy were taken in vain. Crassus was a disgusting usurer, who sold his vote in the open Senate and received criminals in his house for a consideration. Pompey was a farcical hero in a campaign without battles, who had married the daughter of the man who had had relations with his first wife. Cæsar was the accomplice of Catiline and the favourite of Nicomedes. Among the middle and upper classes, in the wealthy and cultured circles which took no part in politics but criticised all that went on in the spirit of detached and impartial spectators, the overwhelming power of the Caucus attracted to Cæsar, Crassus and Pompey a great part of the aversion which at Rome, as in all democracies, is always reserved for any party or group of men, whatever their character, who succeed in securing the sweets of power. At the street corners where the furious edicts of Bibulus were exposed, the crowd was so great that it was almost impossible to pass by. Bibulus was in fact becoming almost popular,* while Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus were sometimes given a chilling reception at festivals and public ceremonies.† The younger generation in the upper classes, more vain and precocious even than that which had preceded it, affected an exalted contempt for the vulgar demagogy which Cæsar seemed definitely to have established at Rome.‡

Cicero and the Dynasts.

Cicero was particularly grieved about the "Dynasts." He wrote to Atticus that Pompey was certainly aspiring to the tyranny, and that the indifference of the great and the impudence of a few ambitious upstarts was transforming the Republic into a Monarchy. Nor could he easily resign himself to playing the *rôle* of a secondary personage.§ He had good reasons for anxiety, not only because of his sincere repugnance against the tyranny of demagogues, but also owing to the growing audacity of Clodius, who was under the open protection of Pompey and Cæsar and desired to renounce his patrician rank to become Tribune of the people. The legal difficulties involved in this step were considerable, but Cæsar came to his help and succeeded by a *Lex Curiata de Arrogatione* in making

* Cic., A., ii. 19, 2; ii. 20, 4; ii. 21, 4.
† *Id.*, 19, 3. ‡ *Id.*, ii, 8, 1.
§ *Id.*, ii. 17, 2.

him a plebeian. He was certain to be elected Tribune in the following year.* 59 B.C.

Pompey as a "Boss."

But these outbursts of hostility and fury seemed to exercise not the slightest influence. It is true that Pompey, who had expected to become, as in 70, the chief of a new Democratic party, composed of distinguished and constitutional politicians, had been a little surprised to find himself ranked beside Cæsar and Crassus as the chief of a mob-government repugnant to his aristocratic temper. He had never learned to drink at the muddy springs of popular invective, and he had much of that delicate susceptibility so characteristic of the aristocratic temper which makes nobles to-day instinctively hostile to the liberty of the Press;† and he must have suffered sorely in secret from the insults of Bibulus and his compeers. He was also somewhat disturbed by Cæsar's domination and attempted by skilful sophistries to divest himself of his share of responsibility for his behaviour.‡ But Crassus was free from all such qualms; at once less burdened with prejudices and more frankly egoistical, he thoroughly enjoyed his new post of power.

Cæsar lord of Rome.

Meanwhile Cæsar, who seemed to grow bolder daily, was the open and undisputed lord of Rome. Neither he nor Crassus was much concerned by the animosity of the upper classes. Open opposition against them there was none. No one ventured to repeat in public what every one was saying in the privacy of his own house. The rare sessions of the Senate were thinly attended, and the Conservative party meetings at the house of Bibulus§ were emptier still. Cicero in his letters to Atticus spoke bitterly of the cowardice of the Senators; but he followed the discreet example of the rest of the citizens.‖

The collapse of the free Republic.

Meanwhile even if the Democratic party was not, as Cato maintained, composed solely of drunkards,¶ Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus were in reality nothing more than the chiefs of a political following which was detested by those classes of the State which were in possession of wealth and culture. How could a rabble of this sort continue to be supreme in a free Republic with elective institutions? What mysterious agency had suddenly destroyed the whole strength of the upper classes

* Lange, R. A., iii. 277.

† Cic., A., ii. 21, 3. ‡ *Id.*, ii. 16, 2.

§ App., B. C., ii. 111. What Appian calls the βουλή can only have been the meeting of Cato's adherents. Bibulus cannot have had a house big enough to accommodate the Senate.

‖ See Cic., A., ii. 15, 16, 17, 21. ¶ Suet., Cæs., 53.

59 B.C. and of that august assembly which had for centuries governed first the small province of Latium, then the Italian peninsula, and lately a world-wide Empire? That mysterious agency was the commercial spirit which had entered in to destroy all ancient institutions.

Individualism v. efficiency.

In the old agricultural society with its organised military aristocracy, the Senate derived its energy and authority from the fact that it represented a single governing class, a class consisting of a landed nobility, which had been fitted by a special training for war and government, which had been subjected to a stern discipline at home and in society, and which was in essential agreement on the few vital questions that political life in a simple state of civilisation brought forward for settlement. But with the growth of imperialism, with the progress of the commercial spirit, with the temptations of culture and luxury, in a word with the progress of all that we are accustomed to call civilisation, the old traditions had become extinct. The development of the selfish passions, of cupidity, ambition and self-indulgence, had driven many members of the upper classes from political life. There was no longer at Rome, as of old, a disciplined and homogeneous body of citizens ready to undertake the responsibilities of government. Instead there was an infinite variety of individuals each of whom was greedy for special pleasures and attracted to special occupations or special vices. None of them was inclined to increase his labours or interrupt his enjoyment by busying himself with public affairs. All were too much engaged at home, too selfish, too unsympathetic to one another, to be able to work harmoniously in an interest common to them all.

Catullus in Roman society.

It was just at this time that Rome brought forth her first and greatest lyric poet, whose wild and passionate notes, with their touch of personal anguish, are symbolic of a tempestuous change of climate in Roman society. Born in the year 84 of a rich family at Verona,* Caius Valerius Catullus received an excellent literary education and at twenty years of age had made his way to the capital. Introduced into high society by Cornelius Nepos, he soon made the acquaintance of all the well-known politicians, the rich merchants, and the distinguished ladies of the city. While he continued to buy books and to study,† he had given himself up with almost

* See, for the date, Giussani, L. R., p. 158.
† Cat., 68, 31.

barbaric impetuosity to a life of pleasure, running recklessly into debt, quarrelling with an over-thrifty father,* and paying court to fine ladies. He had fallen passionately in love with the beautiful but notorious Clodia, wife of Metellus Celer. It had not been difficult to break down the hesitation of an easy-hearted woman who must have been pleased for a moment with the half mad outbursts of a country youth, as a new solace and distraction after the light lovers of the day. Catullus answered the evasive caprices of Clodia with a jealous passion for his Lesbia, whom he claimed entirely as his own and for whom he wore himself out during these years in a succession of quarrels and reconciliations, appeals and invectives, despair and appeasements,† which in no way disturbed their object in the even tenor of a life of pleasure. 59 B.C.

It was to console himself amid the torments of his passion that Catullus took refuge in his extraordinary poetic genius. In verses of an almost brutal sincerity, of a marvellous power and variety of rhythm, subject and expression, he put into music all the most trivial and sorrowful moments of his life, the sudden and violent onset of sensual appetite, the tender confidences of friendship, the melancholy of departure on a distant voyage, the mourning for a brother who died young in Asia, the breezes and bluster of fugitive anger, and the tender and fleeting play of fancy when, amid the noise and frivolity of Rome, his thoughts won back to his native Lake of Garda in its lonely peace, to the little house at Sirmio which waited for him as an old nurse awaits a wandering child, who is astray in a wide and hungry world. Above all he is the poet of love—love in the fierceness and jealousy of its longing, with all its tortures and all its poignancy, and the insoluble contradiction that seems to gnaw at its heart. His poetry.

> Odi et amo. Quare id faciam fortasse requiris.
> Nescio, sed fieri sentio, et excrucior.‡

The lyric poetry of Catullus would be sufficient by itself to explain the success of the political revolution made by Cæsar during his Consulship. Poetry so personal and passionate in its expression could surely only proceed from an age in which the upper and cultivated classes had dispersed upon an individual search for the diverse enjoyments of life, from wealth up to Catullus and his age.

* Giussani, L. R., 159.
† *E.g.* Catullus, 42, 51, 68, ll. 131 f., 70, 72, 77, 92.
‡ Cat., 85.

59 B.C. love, from play to philosophy, abandoning the affairs of government to a class of professional politicians, the majority of whom was at the back and call of any clique or party which for the moment seemed to be in power.

Submission of the Conservatives.

Now that Cæsar had boldly usurped the powers of the Senate, the majority of the Senators were afraid to be on bad terms with the three chiefs of the all-powerful democracy. Cato and Bibulus tried in vain to organise an opposition; the upper classes, dissatisfied but resigned, tamely submitted to the tyranny of the caucus. Lucullus alone attempted for a moment to oppose the triumvirs; but when Cæsar threatened him with a prosecution about the booty he had made in his Eastern wars he relapsed once more into silence.

Cæsar attempts to consolidate his power.

But Cæsar's habitual prudence had not entirely deserted him. He never allowed himself to forget that a power so rapidly acquired might as rapidly be lost. True, he had succeeded in passing a striking series of revolutionary laws; but he knew well that the moment he left Rome the Conservatives would attempt to annul them. He therefore spent the whole of the rest of his Consulship in a characteristically vigorous attempt to consolidate the power of the Triumvirate. It was necessary before all things, to secure for the Consulship in the following year men devoted to his own and his friends' interests. The candidates he selected were Aulus Gabinius, a faithful adherent of Pompey, and Lucius Calpurnius Piso, a member of an old noble family which had, however, deserted the traditions of its past. Piso's father had lost his patrimony and had then devoted himself to business. After making a considerable fortune in military contracts at the time of the Social War, he had married a rich plebeian, the daughter of a merchant at Piacenza.* So far as we can judge, Piso was a man of some intelligence, but prepared in his own interests to take service under any banner. In order to make quite sure of him, Cæsar became engaged to his daughter Calpurnia.

Clodius as election agent.

But above all it was necessary to make certain of a permanent majority in the Assembly. This was the only way of securing that the Conservative party should not take advantage of Cæsar's absence to persuade the people to annul his laws. Granted the selfishness and hostility of the upper and middle classes, it was only amongst the poor and the dregs of the population, amongst the artisans, the freedmen and the

* Cic., in Pis., xxxvii., 87.

beggars, that a mass mob of reliable electors could be found who would be ready to vote at the orders of a leader. But the events of the last few years had shown the danger of trusting blindly in a populace that was as loose and uncompacted as the sand on the seashore. Cæsar therefore determined to organise at least a part of this mob into a regular electoral corps. Looking out for a man for his purpose, he skilfully fixed upon Clodius, in whom the notorious arrogance of his ancestors had been transmuted into a passion for all that was brutal and vulgar, and who loved nothing better than the society of thieves, loafers and desperadoes. Cæsar proposed to assist him to the Tribuneship on condition that he became his chief electoral agent. Clodius accepted. He was only too ready to enjoy a year of power in order to take his vengeance on Cicero, against whom he had nursed a wild hatred ever since his denunciation in the matter of the sacrilege. 59 B.C.

Cicero recovers prestige.

But Bibulus had the elections postponed from July to October. Meanwhile Cicero who about the beginning of July had returned from Campania,* noticed that, amid the general agitation, his prestige was again beginning to rise. Pompey missed no occasion of saying him a gracious word,† while Cæsar proposed to take him to Gaul under his command.‡ Both were clearly anxious not to have him as an adversary. The malcontents, the Conservatives, and the younger generation, all the forces of the opposition, besieged his house as in the great days of the Conspiracy and seemed to regard him as the only man capable of restoring the Constitution.§ Only Clodius was his enemy, and filled Rome with invectives and menaces against him.‖ But Cicero was weary and doubts preyed upon his mind. The flatteries of Cæsar and Pompey had little hold on him, for his aversion for the coalition was deep and sincere. But he had no longer the courage to undertake an energetic opposition. He was perpetually changing his mind, sometimes eager for the fray, sometimes discouraged by the slackness of the Conservatives.¶ In their private meetings, they all roundly abused Cæsar; but in public there was nothing that they would say or do. Only one of the candidates for 58 had refused to swear to his laws.

Moreover the threats of Clodius were beginning to be so disquieting to Cicero, that he gradually forgot all public

* Drümann, G. R., ii. 230; v. 16.
† Cic., A., ii. 19, 4.
‡ *Id.*, ii. 18, 3; A., ii. 19, 5.
§ *Id.*, ii. 22, 3.
‖ *Id.*, ii, 20, 2.
¶ *Id.*, ii. 18, 3; ii. 22, 6.

59 B.C. disorders. He had spoken of them to Pompey and had been reassured by a declaration that Clodius had promised the Triumvirs to do nothing against him.* This kept him quiet for some time, but when he saw Clodius continuing his campaign of invective, his anxieties broke out afresh. He wrote to Atticus to come hastily to Rome to discover the intentions of Clodius through Clodia, with whom Atticus seems to have had intimate relations.† As a matter of fact Clodius was purposely deceiving Pompey. He was really anxious to have Cicero condemned to exile on the accusation of having illegally executed the accomplices of Catiline. But he was clever enough to conceal his purpose from the world; he was well aware how difficult it was to secure the banishment of so distinguished an orator, and was hoping for some opportunity of taking him by surprise.‡

Clodius' designs against Cicero.

The decree of alliance with Ariovistus.

In the meantime Cæsar had proposed an admirable bill, definitely worded, though no doubt difficult to apply, placing a check on the conduct of provincial governors. He further induced Vatinius, who was well paid for his trouble with shares in the company of tax-farmers, to propose a second bill authorising him to settle 5000 colonists with Latin rights at Como.§ And he also took another and a far more momentous step. He made up his mind in favour of alliance with the Suevi, and induced the Senate to give Ariovistus the title of Friend and Ally. Always unscrupulous in his choice of means, he was anxious to secure beforehand every chance of success in the war against the Helvetii, which he reckoned on conducting in the following year. He intended to attack them in their own country before they had time to make a move; and his object in conciliating Ariovistus was to set his mind easy on the score of the Suevi and to ensure the isolation of the Helvetii.

The plot of Vettius.

But Pompey still hesitated and seemed even to regret that he had become involved in the coalition. Cæsar in his perplexity, adopted an ingenious manœuvre to break down his colleague's irresolution. He induced him to believe that the Roman aristocracy had entered into a plot against his life. Vatinius persuaded a police agent called Vettius to induce some frivolous young members of the aristocracy to concoct and then confess a conspiracy against Pompey. Vettius spoke of it to a son of Scribonius Curio. Curio, too clever to swallow the bait, at once told his father, who revealed it to

* Cic., A., ii., 20, 2; 22, 2.
† *Id.*, 22, 4 and 5.
‡ Dion, xxxviii. 12.
§ Lange, R. A., iii. 284.

Pompey. Vettius was arrested and put into prison, where he laid information against several young aristocrats, amongst others Brutus, son of Servilia. It is not impossible that Vettius may actually have spoken to Brutus on the matter and that Brutus was imprudent enough to listen, which would indicate that Vettius had an ominous insight into character; in any case Servilia hastened to Cæsar, who went to visit Vettius in prison. Cæsar then assembled the people and confronted them with Vettius, who told a long story of a plot in which Brutus no longer figured, but in which vague accusations were brought against powerful personages in the Conservative party, against Lucullus, Domitius, Ahenobarbus and Cicero himself. After that the matter was hushed up. It was even asserted that Cæsar had Vettius secretly put to death in prison.* 59 B.C.

In October the elections at last† took place. Piso and Gabinius were elected Consuls and Clodius Tribune of the people. The Prætors were all Conservatives; and amongst them was Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus. Soon afterwards the Senate, in which the Conservative party had lost a great part of its influence, on the proposal of Crassus and Pompey, added the government of Narbonese Gaul with one legion† to the province already given to Cæsar. Cæsar, now sure of his pro-Consular command, was occupied in definitely consolidating his position amongst the electors by the organisation of what we may not unfairly describe as the Tammany Hall of antiquity. Clodius had hardly entered upon his office when, on December 10, he announced a series of bills, each outbidding the other in popularity, which had certainly been approved beforehand by Cæsar. First came a corn bill, according to which poor citizens could be provided with corn by the State, no longer at a low figure but gratis; next a bill permitting the people to meet and pass laws on all feast days; finally a bill granting complete freedom of association to the working classes at Rome.‡ Some of the Conservatives, including Cicero, wished to meet these proposals with a vigorous opposition, but Clodius adroitly quieted them by giving them to understand that if they consented to approve them, he would cease to attack Cicero.§ Thus it came about that in the first days of 58 they were all of them approved without opposition. Clodius' bills.

* Dion, xxxviii. 9; Cic., A., ii. 24; Suet., Cæs., 20; Cic., in Vat., 10–11. The story is not improbable, but it is only conjectural. The authorities are very confused.

† Dion, xxxviii. 8; Suet., Cæs., 22; Cic., Prov. Cons., xv. 36.

‡ Lange, R. A., iii. 289 ff. § Dion, xxxviii., 14.

58 B.C. Clodius thereupon proposed a new law entrusting one of his clients, Sextus Clodius, a man of poor and obscure family, with the task of drawing up the list of those who should be admitted to the free distribution of corn.*

The Tammany Hall of Rome. This led to a curious and unexpected development. A large number of shopkeepers, pedlars and artisans who possessed slaves and had difficulty in supporting them on account of the high price of corn, gave them their freedom in order that they might be fed at the public expense.† The saving in food was calculated to compensate their masters for the loss of service entailed by their enfranchisement. This caused a rapid increase in the number of those entitled to the distribution: for Sextus was not scrupulous as to what names were inserted on the list. The law was thus of very considerable benefit to the poor, and the popularity of Cæsar, Pompey, Crassus and Clodius was correspondingly increased. With the aid of Sextus and the Consuls, Clodius now found it easy to establish associations among the working classes in every quarter of the city, which were to serve at once as labour and electoral guilds. He further organised into troops or *decuries* a large number of freedmen and even of slaves, under the command of corporals who were to lead them to the vote on the receipt of orders from head-quarters.‡ This electoral army, recruited from amongst the poor cosmopolitan electorate of Rome and analogous to that recruited by Tammany Hall amongst a very similar electorate in New York, was entirely at the service of the three leaders; yet thanks to the new Corn Law, its maintenance was actually paid for by the government. In order to facilitate his distribution of corn, Clodius passed through the Assembly a bill decreeing the annexation of Cyprus and the confiscation of the treasures of its King, on the pretext that he continued to give assistance to the pirates.§

Clodius attacks Cicero. Clodius had served his leaders with both zeal and ability; he was now ready for his reward. He clamoured for the condemnation of Cicero. Cæsar, Crassus and Pompey would gladly have withdrawn Cicero from Rome, but in some less ignominious fashion. Cæsar, who had already left Rome and was on the point of setting out for Gaul, went so far as to renew his offer to take him as legate; but the wily Clodius,

* Cic., de Domo., x. 15. † Dion, xxxix. 24.

‡ Cic., Pro Sest., xv. 34; xxv, 55; In Pis., v. 11; de Domo., xxi. 54; Post Red., in sen., xiii. 33.

§ Liv., Per., 104; Cic., Pro Sest., xxvi. 57.

who had repeatedly assured the Triumvirs that he desired no more than to make Cicero uncomfortable, held his hand until he had organised his electoral associations. When his preparations were complete he darted upon his prey. He suddenly came forward with a law threatening with exile all who had condemned or should in future condemn to death a Roman citizen without giving him the chance of appealing to the people.* This is exactly what had happened in the case of the Catilinarians. At the same time, to secure that the Consuls should give him free action in the persecution of Cicero, Clodius proposed a Provincial Bill according to which, notwithstanding the recent arrangements of Cæsar, Macedonia was to be given for five years to Piso, and Syria to Gabinius with the right of making war outside the province and of administering justice among the free nations.† The proposal was strengthened by the grant of a large sum of money. 58 B.C.

Cicero and his friends attempted to resist and a deputation of Senators and capitalists visited the Consuls. Cicero begged Piso, Pompey and Crassus to intervene, and his friends attempted to summon public meetings to protest against the law of Clodius. It was all in vain. The Triumvirs complained bitterly of Clodius' adroitness in making them partly responsible for the scandal of banishing a man so illustrious as Cicero; but they did not dare to enter the lists against the all-powerful demagogue. Crassus contented himself with letting his son Publius, a young man of great ability and high aspirations, act in his place. But, intimidated by Clodius and discouraged by the silence of his three chiefs, the public refused to stir in Cicero's defence. Overcome by the suddenness of the attack, his friends felt obliged to urge submission for the moment, and advised him to go into exile with the hope of a speedy and honourable return. Cicero wrung his hands and vowed he would refuse to go. But the situation left him no choice; and he finally took the only wise course which remained to him, and left Rome in the first days of March 58. As soon as he was gone Clodius had his exile confirmed by law and destroyed his houses and villas.‡ **Cicero submits and leaves Rome.**

A short time afterwards Cæsar left Italy on the receipt of disquieting news from Gaul, and Cato left for Cyprus as the nominee of Clodius, to carry out the provisions of his law of **Cæsar and Cato leave Italy.**

* Lange, R. A., iii. 292.
† Plut., Cic., 30; Lange, R. A., iii. 293.
‡ Lange, R. A., iii. 294 f.

58 B.C. annexation. Cæsar took with him to Gaul a large band of friends who were to serve under his orders in the army. Amongst them were Labienus, who had been Tribune in 63, Mamurra, [Formiæ.] a knight from Formiæ who had probably up to this time been a tax-farmer, but was now to be his chief engineer, and Publius, the son of Crassus. As for Cato, he had long hesitated to accept the extraordinary mission to Cyprus. He realised that Clodius had merely selected him in order to make sure of his withdrawal and to leave the path clear for the Triumvirs and himself. But he reflected that Clodius might bring an action against him for disobeying an order of the people. Moreover there was nothing to be done at Rome, while in Cyprus he would at least be ensuring that the riches of the king passed into the treasury of the Republic. He therefore decided to go, taking with him his nephew Marcus Brutus, who needed a change of air after his entanglement with Vettius. Brutus was a young man who was passionately devoted to books and who had already won a great reputation at Rome not only for his studious tastes but also for his still rarer qualities of personal character.

CHAPTER XVIII

EMPIRE-BUILDING

The luxury of Lucullus—His villa on the Pincian—The last enterprise of the conqueror of Pontus—The Oriental slaves in Italy—The emigration of Italians into the provinces—The *conventus civium Romanorum*—The old and the new Rome—Rome in 58 B.C.—The "corruption" of Rome—The conquests of ancient Rome and the progress of modern industry: similarity of their effects—Italy by conquering an Empire, becomes a bourgeois society and a mercantile democracy—The progress of civilisation and the new Italian bourgeoisie—The contrasts between the mercantile democracies of ancient and modern times—Political indifference and military feebleness of the upper classes at the time of Cæsar—Growing political power of the urban labourers—Public opinion—Dangers entailed by these contrasts—Reasons why, in the ancient world, a mercantile democracy was necessarily aggressive and conquering—Slavery and its causes—The corn trade—What a Roman would say to import duties on corn—The demand for the precious metals—Why Rome annexed her Empire—Why war has now lost its old economic significance—Political and administrative disorders at the time of Cæsar—The Senate: reasons for its decadence—The decay of the army—The power of the Three—Its causes—Pompey—Crassus—Cæsar—What Cæsar intended to achieve in Gaul—Destiny and human greatness—The last years of Lucullus.

Lucullus as the missionary of Empire.

MEANWHILE all over Italy the rapid progress of luxury went on unchecked. On his return from the East Lucullus had almost, if not absolutely, withdrawn from politics, and as though he felt that he had carried one great historic task to conclusion, set out to work with all his powers upon another. After having excited in his countrymen the passion and the daring for the indefinite extension of Empire, he was now teaching them, the unconscious possessors of the greatest treasure house in the world, how to employ the riches which he had placed in their hands. With an energy which seemed to grow rather than diminish with his years, the man who had lived till fifty in conditions of old-fashioned frugality, and had then, late in

59 B.C. middle life, overrun the kingdoms and despoiled the treasures of two great Oriental monarchs, was now dazzling Italy with his display of Asiatic magnificence as he had formerly dazzled her with the risks and the romance of his campaigns.

The banquets of Lucullus. Out of the spoils of Mithridates and Tigranes he constructed on that part of the Pincian now called La Trinita dei Monti, between the Via Sistina, the Via Due Macelli and the Via Capo le Case, a magnificent palace with halls, loggias, gardens and libraries and embellished throughout with the finest works of art.* He purchased the Island of Nisida and spent huge sums in turning it into a delightful summer resort.† He built a villa at Baiæ, and bought vast estates at Frascati where he employed a large number of Greek architects,‡ in the construction, not of ordinary farm houses, but of splendid mansions on each of the properties, with luxurious banqueting halls§ and every artistic embellishment. Here he invited all the learned and artistic Greeks of the day, together with troops of his personal friends, to sumptuous feasts prepared by the best cooks in Rome to satisfy the gluttony which was the one sensual indulgence that appealed to the veteran who had come to his enjoyments so late in life. Aphrodite herself never deigned to cross the threshold so impatiently thrown open to the ministrations of pleasure. As he sat installed at these magnificent repasts, the thought can surely never have crossed his mind that, while the glory of the policy which he had conceived and initiated was to fall almost entirely to a younger disciple, his own name would survive upon the lips of men associated only with the memories of luxurious entertainment; that posterity would forget that he had given Italy the cherry tree, and misconstrue the historic importance of his conquests, to linger and moralise in half-envious disgust over the prodigious Sybaritic hospitality of his dinners. And yet this strange mania for building and banqueting was itself but the sequel to the work which Lucullus had inaugurated in Pontus, when he ransacked its treasures and took captive its inhabitants. All that he had achieved in the East was one long protest against the simpler traditions of Italian life; and it was by a true if unconscious instinct that at the close of his life, on his return

[Nesis.] [Tusculum.]

* Lanciani in B. C., 1891, p. 150 f.; Gilbert, T. R., iii. 376, n. 3; Borsari, T. R., 196. E. Caetani-Lovatelli, *I Giardini di Lucullo* in the *Nuova Antologia*, Aug. 16, 1901.

† Varro, R. R., iii. 17, 9, appears to be alluding to the villa at Nisida.

‡ *Id.*, 17, 9. § *Id.*, i. 2, 10.

and retirement, he became the apostle of the civilisation of the Hellenised Orient, with all its refinement and all its depravity. 59 B.C.

The Alien Immigration

Nor indeed was his teaching neglected by his countrymen. Society was being transformed with almost dizzy rapidity. The assimilation of Orientals into the Italian population, the special characteristic of the great imperialist era, was already far advanced. Never before had Italy been so crowded with slaves. The conquests of the two Luculli and of Pompey, the continual warfare and raiding on the frontiers, and the familiar traffic in men sold by their creditors or kidnapped by the pirates, had already brought, and were still bringing, to Italy a vast multitude of men and women. They formed a strange and motley assortment. There were architects, engineers, doctors, painters, goldsmiths, weavers and metal-workers from Asia, singers and dancers from Syria, hucksters and fortune-tellers from Palestine, sellers of medicinal and poisonous herbs, shepherds from Gaul, Germany, Scythia and Spain, all equally and indiscriminately dispersed among the houses of the upper and middle classes in Rome and Italy. Every one of these immigrants had been robbed of home and fortune by the stress of the struggle between man and man and had been obliged, whether young or old, to begin his life over again.

The Stragglers.

Gradually, as time went on, a division of labour was formed in their ranks. Some refused to submit and were done away with by their masters. Some escaped from their captors and turned to brigandage and piracy, or were lost in the metropolis or on the roads of Italy, or met their death in a brawl or a rising or some natural accident. Others succumbed to disease or exhaustion, or were unable to survive the degradation of their state and the loss of all that was dear to them. In every great migration of the human family from one part of the earth to another, whether freely or forcibly undertaken, there are thousands of stragglers who fall thus by the way.

The slave-workers and freedmen.

But these, after all, were but an insignificant minority. There still remained a large body of immigrants, including most of those drawn from the civilised lands of the East, who were skilful workers in the arts and slowly became acclimatised to the inhabitants and the conditions of their new country As the memory of their home died out of their souls, they consented to acquire the language of their conquerors and taught them in their turn what they had to teach.

59 B.C. Sometimes they were allowed to exercise their profession in a shop opened by their patron, partly for their own profit and partly for his. Sometimes they even obtained complete liberty on condition that they paid over to their patron a part of their earnings. They began to be regarded as the natural free workers of the community, who surrendered a portion of their profits to their superiors to maintain upper and middle class Italians in a luxurious idleness. Their ranks were being continually swollen by recruits from below: for with the improvement in the relations between slaves and their masters it became customary before long to grant liberty to faithful and skilled slaves after six years of servitude.* Thus was formed the nucleus of a new freedman class, with definite rights in the Roman courts; for the laws regarding the moral and economic position of freedmen were gradually modified, as definite decisions were given upon particular cases which arose. †

Slavery and speculation. The slave immigrants found a ready outlet for their abilities in the engrossing speculations of their adopted countrymen. Many Italians bought skilled slaves with the object of using them to instruct their fellows; and there were upper and middle class households in Rome and throughout Italy which had become regular schools of arts and crafts. To take but one instance, a perfumer of Mithridates who had been the slave and then the freedman of a certain Lutatius, opened a shop at Rome, where he prepared his perfumes, no longer for the harem of an Eastern Sultan, but for the fashionable ladies of Rome.‡ All over Italy in the houses of the rich and well-to-do there were slaves and freedmen acting as blacksmiths, carpenters, weavers, tapestry workers, master masons, painters and upholsterers, who were employed for their owners and for an outside public whose necessities increased as the years went on. Out on the countryside the same process might be witnessed. Men who had started life as peasants in the Cyclades and Syria, were busy perfecting the cultivation of the vine and the olive, teaching improvements in the preparation of oil and wine and in the scientific raising and feeding of stock.

Slaves as brain-workers. Thus among all classes of the Italian community there was an increasing variety and refinement of demand and a progres-

* Cic., Phil., viii. xi. 32.

† Ciccotti, T. S. 221, ff. E. Ferrero, *Dei Libertini*, Turin, 1877, p. 12. Karlowa, R. R., 2, 142 f.

‡ C. I. L., i. 1065.

sive specialisation in the employments of skilled labourers and brain workers. The spread of education through the whole of the middle class provided openings for hundreds of rhetoricians and grammarians; the humble but hard-working profession of teaching was rapidly crowded with quick-witted freedmen.* But this by no means exhausted the intellectual occupations. There was a large class of slaves living upon the ignorance and the weaknesses of masters who had failed, or refused, to outgrow the old-fashioned Italian simplicity. The men among them became accountants, land-agents, major-domos, confidants, librarians, copyists, translators, secretaries or intermediaries, while the women found open still easier pathways to becoming at once the servants and the rulers of their masters. The houses of politicians like Pompey, Crassus and Cæsar were miniature government offices where numberless freedmen and slaves from the East were engaged on their master's work, organising their festivals, answering their correspondence, and keeping up to date the ledgers, the lists of dependents and the family archives. 59 B.C.

Side by side with this enormous influx of immigrants from the provinces into Italy, there was a very large emigration of Italians into the newly annexed parts of the Empire. Just as small colonies of Englishmen and Germans are to be found at the present day in every corner of the world, so countless Italians had by now become established all over the Mediterranean basin, not only in Greece and in the province of Asia, but on the recently conquered coastline of the Adriatic, as at Salona † and Alessio,‡ in Narbonese Gaul, in Spanish towns such as Cordova and Seville,§ at Utica, Hadrumetum and Thapsus in Africa,‖ at Antioch and other towns in Syria, whither numerous adventurers and traders from Italy had followed in the wake of Pompey's army.¶ These Italians engaged in the most manifold employments. They were contractors to the army, farmers of the taxes, dealers in slaves or the other produce of the country, managers, sub-managers or employees in big financial companies, agents of rich Italians who had lands or money invested in the provinces, landowners or occupiers of public land, and finally and most frequently, professional usurers. Leaving home, as a rule, utterly planless and penniless, **The Italians in the provinces.** [Lissus.] [Corduba.] [Hispalis.]

* E. Ferrero, op. cit., 28 n. 2.
† Cæs., B. C., iii. 9, 2. ‡ *Id.*, iii. 29, 1; iii. 40, 5.
§ *Id.*, ii. 19, 3; ii. 20, 5; B. Al., 57, 5.
‖ B. C., ii. 3, 1; B. Al., 97, 2. ¶ B. C., iii. 102–103.

59 B.C. whatever the corner of the Empire to which fortune had led them, these Italian settlers soon became living and integral portions of that single and spreading organism which was slowly drawing its tentacles over the whole coastline of the Mediterranean. They organised themselves into clubs or associations regulated by statute, called *Conventus Civium Romanorum;* and they were the natural escort and Council of governors, who, despatched at short notice to an unknown country, always ended by becoming either their tools or their accomplices. Thus they came to regard themselves as a select and limited aristocracy among the indigenous population, protected and privileged by their wealth, their rights as Roman citizens, and the patronage of the governors. Autocrats in their own small sphere, they despoiled and maltreated the natives and rode roughshod over the laws: though sometimes too they would leave records of a more benevolent *régime.** Thus the two great migrations of conquered and conquerors met and crossed face to face on the high roads of Empire, each moving foredoomed to a historic destiny; the one with its gaze toward the West, seeking service for a quick hand and a ready brain with the arts and the education, the wisdom and the depravity of the Orient: the other hastening Eastward to use and abuse all the powers of Empire, with arms and authority and riches, and the blind pride of a master who little knows what a future lies ambushed in the docility of his slaves.

The new provincial aristocracy.

Rome in 59 B.C.

But both, in their new homes, looked to the same metropolis; and Rome, the mother of conquerors, had changed with her children. The imperial metropolis still preserved a few landmarks of the old capital of Latium: venerable and unsightly temples of worm-eaten timber, patrician houses in the old Latin style, basilicas and monuments decorated with rude Etruscan terra-cottas. But the old order was passing, both in spirit and appearance. The modest provincial city, with its restricted working class quarter† and wide strips of field and grove pleasantly diversified by the little detached houses of the patricians, each with its small garden like an English cottage, was now everywhere outgrowing the old circuit of her walls. The disorder of the slums now encumbered and encroached upon the rich. The immense and towering lodging houses, which formed the principal dwelling of the poor, were packed

* Deloume, M. A. R., 93 f., 302 f.
† Gilbert, T. R., iii., 49–51.

together in great numbers one against the other, fastened on to the slopes or raised upon the summits of the seven hills.* The careful and almost monastic combination of instruction and example, of mutual supervision and discipline, which had taught the old Roman nobility to conquer the world by apprenticeship in the school of self-control and responsibility, had now long since become obsolete. Ambition and avarice and all the minions of Lust, Aphrodite and Dionysus, the nine Muses and the Philosophy of Greece, had burst in upon the city like a troop of Bacchanals; and from Rome they had won their way through the Peninsula, filling men's hearts, wherever they passed by, with an unsatisfied longing for wealth and power and pleasure and knowledge. The proud and mighty Empire disdained to recall the obscurity of its origin, as the conqueror of Pontus, amid the splendid opulence which distracted his last years in his villa on the Pincian, just dimly remembered, as from some former existence, the austere young aristocrat who had gone to his first battle by the side of the great Sulla. 59 B.C.

Yet reflection such as this would have availed but little. Contemporaries who had been at once spectators and actors in the great transformation spoke of it as a "corruption of ancient manners," as a disease inevitable from the frailty of mankind, whose amazing and ominous progress no foresight of statesmen could stay. But we, who have a longer and riper experience of human nature and history, can form a clearer and less clouded vision; across the gulf of intervening centuries the lamentation and invective of the ancients fall strangely familiar on our ears; and by listening faithfully to their echoes, and meditating on their meaning, we may penetrate at last to the very heart of their complaint Only so shall we comprehend the true nature of Roman Imperialism. The "corruption" of Rome.

When they spoke of "corruption," Roman writers were thinking of the upheaval occasioned in the aristocratic, agricultural and military society of ancient Italy by the progress of Imperial expansion. The transformation which was thus brought about is analagous to that effected by the progress of industry in England and France during the nineteenth century, in North Italy and Germany since 1848, and in America between the days of Washington and Franklin and the time of the War of Secession. Almost identically the same effects The industrial revolution.

* Cic., in Leg. Agr., ii. xxxv, 96.

59 B.C. which have been produced in these countries by the increase of wealth and the progress of industry were produced in ancient society by the extension of the Roman power over the whole of the Mediterranean basin.

Marks of an industrial society.

The symptoms are almost too familiar to need recapitulation. An increasing percentage of the nation abandoned labour in the fields for commerce, money-lending and speculation. Agriculture itself became an industry requiring capital and constantly demanding speedier and more skilful methods. The expense of living, and the standard of comfort and luxury, went up in all classes of the community, and rose from generation to generation with progressive rapidity. There was an increase of the artisan population in all the cities and an increasing variety of professions in which it was employed. The old territorial nobility fell into decay, while the rich merchants and capitalists gradually developed into a powerful, numerous and exclusive caste. The middle class grew steadily in wealth and independence. Education, once the luxury and prerogative of a small aristocracy, was eagerly sought after by its rivals from below, as an instrument for the acquisition of power and riches, and for the revival and adaptation to the needs of a new age of the ancient traditions in all departments of life, whether public or private, from law, education and medicine, to agriculture, politics and war. Money and brains became synonymous with power. Rome grew at the same rate as Paris and Berlin, New York and Milan, in the nineteenth century; and the widespread inclination for urban life was causing even the smaller towns to increase in size and improve in appearance.

United Italy.

Thus Italy was no longer a nation of thrifty and hard-working peasants, but the conqueror and usurer of the Mediterranean world. She was now a united and homogeneous community in which, with the exception of a few miserable outcasts, all ranks in the State, nobility, financiers, and merchants, had been drawn together into a single bourgeois class, living in ease and comfort on its invested capital: on the quick profits derived from Imperial expansion, and on the labour and services of multitudinous slaves, who worked in their fields, or looked after their houses, filled the intellectual professions or engaged in commerce, administration and politics. The suspense and depression which had provoked the disorders of the Catilinarian agitation had been removed by the vast treasure which Pompey and his men had brought back to the West, and by the taxes and exploitating of the newly conquered

provinces. Once more precious metals were cheap and abundant; and trade and speculation were proportionately brisk. 59 B.C.

The Italian countryside.

And Italy, of course, bore marks of the change. All over the country the virgin forest was disappearing before the axe, and the primitive farm buildings with which even the larger land-owners had once been content, were being rapidly demolished. The hideous slave-shelters or compounds, with their gangs of forced labourers, vanished from the scene, together with the huge desolate tracts of pasture where they had spent their days, to be replaced by vineyards, olive-groves and orchards, now planted in all parts of the Peninsula. All round the great cities, there was a gay belt of villas and gardens, surrounded by larger estates on which the new slave immigrants contentedly cultivated the vine or the olive, or bred animals for the stable or transport, under the direction of a Greek or Oriental bailiff; while the countryside was dotted with the pleasant cottages of landlords, who farmed their own holdings with the help of a few slaves. The ancient townships of Italy, still engirdled with walls of Cyclopean masonry from the old days of incessant and ubiquitous warfare, hastening to don the adornments of a new era of peace, planned temples and squares, handsome basilicas and sumptuous palaces, to the designs and direction of Eastern architects. To match the changeless beauty of her sky and sea, Italy eagerly cast off her old barbaric trappings of corn and woodland for a more smiling vesture of vine and olive, fine cities and bright gardens, the gifts or the plunder of the bounteous East. [Ergastula.]

Three modern problems.

Italy was thus passing through the same period of rejuvenation as Europe and the United States at the present day. She was being transformed from a caste aristocracy of nobles and peasants into a homogeneous democracy of merchants and bourgeois. We might expect her then to encounter some of our characteristic modern problems by the way. And indeed we discover that she was faced with the same three torturing contradictions which baffle the wisdom of twentieth-century statesmanship. There is the contradiction between the sentiment of democracy and the unequal distribution of wealth; between elective institutions and the political indifference of the upper and middle classes; and lastly between the weakening of the military spirit and the heightening of the national pride, between ambitious dreams of war and conquest and the distaste among all classes for active fighting.

59 B.C. The decadence of the ancient nobility and the loosening of its control over the lower ranks of society: the growing pride and independence and authority of the middle class and the diffusion of education and political discussion: and the formation in the capital of a numerous intractable and irresponsible proletariat, meant the close of the old era of efficient if narrow-minded aristocratic administration, when the nobles monopolised the offices, sat together in the Senate House, and imposed their own harmonious will and policy upon a submissive Italy. The idea that government should be by the people and for the people, that politics were subject to the criticism of public opinion, that the State officials were not the masters but the servants and Ministers of the nation, had become as prevalent in Italy then as in twentieth-century Europe. And yet, as in Europe and the United States at the present time, the great bulk of the upper and middle classes took but a languid interest in public affairs; they preferred to spend their time upon commerce or agriculture, study or pleasure, and were unwilling to take part in political conflicts or accept official responsibilities, to suffer the hardships of military service or even the inconvenience of voting.

Lords v. Ministers.

The work of the quietists. Yet these political anchorites and abstainers lived no idle or careless lives. It was they who painfully imported and planted the trees of the East on their native hills, who laboured to increase and improve the vines, the olives and the cattle of Italy, who studied and wrote on the philosophy of Greece, who acclimatised the arts and the industries of Asia, who reformed the architecture of temples, houses and cities, and learnt to apply works of art in their decoration—who were the first, in short, to change an uncouth and agricultural country into what Italy has been for mankind ever since, a joy and admiration to generations of beholders. It is now sixteen centuries since the disappearance of the Roman Empire, and though in the pages of too many modern historians the mighty host of the workers lies concealed and contemned behind the dominant personality of a few soldiers and politicians, their work has lived after them. On the plains and hillsides of Italy to-day vineyards, orchards and olive groves shake out to the wind the last surviving trophies of the world-conquest of Rome.

Panem et Circences. Yet these were the men who gave the death blow to the ancient spirit of Roman citizenship, and allowed the elective institutions of the State to sink into the hands of the ambitious

dilettanti and grasping adventurers who disputed for the suffrages, and controlled the organisations, of the Roman proletariat. For the proletariat was the only part of the population which was still passionately interested in its rulers; it found in politics a pleasant and gratuitous entertainment, as absorbing as the more expensive diversions of the rich; and eking out as it did a precarious livelihood on the margin of subsistence, it had the largest stake and interest in the policy of the State. To have no politics would for the Roman poor have meant to have no bread. It was their politics that supplied them with deep draughts of good wine and feasts of pork and thrushes on the big State holidays, with the easy and well-paid labour on public works or the excitements of the gladiatorial show, or the petty cash to gamble at dice or recoup them for an evening's pleasure. 59 B.C.

Does not all this correspond, in however rudimentary a form, to the growing power enjoyed to-day in all States which have elective institutions by the Socialist party, drawing its recruits amongst the urban labourers, who stand in especial need of the protection of government? And is there not a suggestive parallel between the well-to-do public of Italy and our modern bourgeoisie, which, dispensing more easily with direct help from the State, distracted by its own private interests and occupations, enervated by the succession and variety of its pleasures, satisfied with the influential privileges of education and riches and the helpless, if well-directed, criticisms of a congenial irritation, seems everywhere to be making a dignified withdrawal from the arena of politics? The political revolution of Cæsar's Consulship was only the last phase in a transformation which had long been taking place. In this department of his activity Cæsar may perhaps fitly be compared with a modern Socialist leader, or rather with a Tammany Boss in New York. Roman politics had become debased into an open and world-wide market for laws and appointments, kingdoms and provinces, exemptions and sinecures and the deals of financiers: a frenzied cockpit of intrigue and swindling, assassination and blackmail: the resort not only of the vilest and most violent of the men of the time, but of the corruptest and most insidious of the women: where, if any honest Roman strayed in by accident, he was either speedily extinguished or as speedily became soiled with the contagion of his company. Socialism and the urban labourer.

But the new bourgeoisie was losing more than a mere interest in home intrigues and elections; it was forfeiting its old

59 B.C. aptitude for a military life. The conquests of Lucullus and Pompey had afforded vast gratification to the Imperialist susceptibilities of the middle class; they had disseminated a sentiment bordering on adoration for Alexander the Great, together with the most fantastic dreams of world-wide domination. But the great majority of the arm-chair strategists who were ready to overrun the world in the footsteps of the great Macedonian, could not have endured a single day of genuine soldiering. The old law according to which all men from seventeen to forty-six were liable to military service was indeed still nominally in force; but merchants and capitalists, landlords, and professional men, refused to suffer the interruption of their business or their pleasure by the inconsiderate obligations of military service; and the magistrates who were responsible for the levies now only enrolled volunteers. The arrangement worked not unlike the present system in England.* Those who enlisted were generally men who had failed in every other town or country occupation, and gladly entered a profession in which they received the pay of 224 *denarii* a year,† and were not only fed and clothed, but had the chance of winning prize-money from their general or attaining the coveted position of centurion. It was only when there was a dearth of volunteers that the State used its authority of compulsion, and even then it drew its recruits exclusively from amongst the unemployed in the towns or from the free peasants and the smaller proprietors in the mountains, where some relics still survived of the old Roman fighting stock. Yet, even with these resources to draw upon, the ranks were not replenished. Italy was now almost wholly a nation of money-makers and pleasure-seekers; and although the numbers in the armies were comparatively small, it was soon found impossible to maintain them at full strength with Italian recruits. Thus the military organisation was gradually extended. It became necessary to keep the soldiers a great many years under arms, and to admit recruits from amongst the more primitive Latins of Cisalpine Gaul, where the original Celtic population had mixed with immigrants from Italy to form a class of moderate proprietors, who still preserved the large families, the simple manners and morals, and the adventurous temperament, which had beaten back Hannibal six generations before.‡ Indeed, within the very next decade, we shall find the recruiting

Militarism and the new military system.

[About £9.]

* Rüstow, H. K. C., 2. † *Id.*, 32.
‡ Nitzsch, G. V., 196.

sergeants of the Republic withdrawing in despair from Southern and Central Italy and trusting to the Po Valley to fill the gaps in their ranks. 59 B.C.

Yet from time to time, as in present-day Europe, black storm clouds of anger would beat up suddenly from the horizon to lash the stagnant waters of civic indifference; and the unsuspected passion of an apathetic electorate would surprise and overwhelm the proud coalitions and their chiefs. The unkingly usurpers, who feared neither the gods in Heaven nor any lord on earth, sat trembling on their thrones before the invisible authority of general opinion, before the pent and gathering indignation of the educated public. The sleeping giant could be master when he willed. No party in the State could do systematic violence to a class who by wealth, numbers and knowledge was supreme in the community. Their influence can be felt through the whole field of policy. Why else was Pompey, despite his riches and renown, so scrupulous not to offend the Republican sentiment of Italy? Why was the all-powerful Crassus so impatient to obliterate the more discreditable incidents of a doubtful career? Cæsar himself was as greatly under their dominance. When he departed for Gaul the chief idea in his mind was to regain, by a brilliant succession of victories, the respect he had forfeited among a sensitive public by the extravagance and corruption of a disordered youth, the indecent propaganda of his years under Crassus, and the radical and revolutionary policy of his Consulship. It is singular indeed how results clash with motives when the actors are moving in a changing scene. Vox dei.

Yet it would be foolish and misleading to exaggerate the parallel. If our modern civilisation is struggling under the burden of very similar problems, we are far less acutely conscious of their incidence. To ancient Italy they were a matter of life and death. The political apathy of the civilised nations and their growing unfitness for a military life do not seem, for the present at any rate, to menace the very existence of white civilisation. There is a very good reason for the difference. The mercantile democracies of our own epoch depend, like all communities, upon sustained effort; but they depend upon an effort in which the struggle of man against nature exerts a more powerful leverage than the struggle of man against man. They depend, that is, upon industry: and the object of industry is to make the forces of Nature subservient to human use. But in the effort which brought a mercantile Ancient warfare and modern industry.

59 B.C. democracy into being in ancient Italy, the struggle of man against man was far more powerful than the struggle of man against nature. In the face and in defiance of all tempting analogies there remains this great and essential difference between ancient and modern life. It arises from the fact that the world of antiquity was poorer and less populous than the world of to-day, and its knowledge of nature and powers of production thus proportionately curtailed. A mercantile bourgeoisie of the type which circumstances enabled to be developed in ancient Italy can take root almost anywhere in the twentieth century world—in a small and defenceless territory like Belgium, or a great and conquering sea-power like England, amongst a huge democracy in an almost empty continent, like the United States, or in a warlike monarchy like Germany, established upon some of the most unfertile soil in Europe. All that is required for a country is that a small number of able and active men should form an industrial aristocracy, accumulate a certain amount of capital, lay it out with skill and offer abundant opportunities for labour. If labour is scarce in the country itself, it will soon come in from abroad. Workers will cross the ocean unasked in the search of employment, and accept it however painful and degrading its conditions; they will descend into the bowels of the earth; they will pass their life on a cockle shell tumbling on the waves; they will spend their day from sunrise to sunset in Cyclopean caverns before furnaces of molten steel, in obedience to the iron laws of industrial discipline and subordination.

Cosmopolitan immigration then and now.

In the workshops of the United States there are busy hordes of cosmopolitan labourers who have voluntarily emigrated from all parts of the world. They find a parallel in ancient society in the multitude of slaves and freedmen from Greece and Asia, Gaul and Germany, Spain and Scythia, who were employed at Rome and throughout Italy in the possession and for the profit of the bourgeoisie. But these ancient immigrants did not come in freely; all, or almost all, were shipped to Italy as cargoes of human goods. Now we shall see in the sequel that the Roman slave-trade affected no permanent depopulation or damage in the slave-supplying countries of the East. It is clear therefore that there must have been an excess of population in those regions, as there is to-day in those parts of Europe whence the American emigrants chiefly flow. This suggests an interesting question. Why did not the skilled labourers and brain-workers of the East emigrate voluntarily to

the West in sufficient numbers to satisfy the Italian demand? 59 B.C.

The gradations of modern society.

The answer is very simple. Because ancient life was still too simple to draw them from their homes. In the modern civilised world the conditions of life in the different strata of society pass from wealth at the top to poverty at the base through an infinite gradation of intermediate stages of comfort. Thus in every section of the community from the highest to the lowest, but especially among the labouring population, there are minute differences between the standard of man and man and profession and profession, which are quite as important, in their peculiar function, as the larger differences between class and class. For this delicate and complicated gradation of differences is the never-failing instrument by which the capitalist *bourgeoisie* succeeds in attracting men to its service even across distances of thousands of miles. In a world so populous, and so eager for enjoyment, as our own, it is impossible that capital should ever fail, provided only that it offers a reasonable wage, to find men who, to attain some slightly greater measure of comfort and luxury, will consent to learn and to perform the most repellent or dangerous or exhausting labour.

The great gulf in ancient life.

But in the ancient world this instrument of persuasion was not available; there were practically no gradations between the demands of the workers. From an absolutely unmeasured luxury, which was only possible to the very richest, life passed down, at one step, to a primitive level, where food was of the very simplest and pleasure meant a rare evening of dissipation or inebriety, or a free festival provided by the priests or the plutocrats or the government. Since his needs were so much fewer, the free labourer in the East was less active and enterprising than the workman of to-day. Even if population increased and life became more difficult, he remained in his own country. Having neither the means nor the desire to improve his position, why should he face the pains and perils of an unknown journey to seek a distant master who would always remain a stranger? Adventurers and vagabonds flocked freely to Rome from every corner of her Empire; but the ordinary labourer remained in the provinces. He required to be brought.

Here at last we have the key to the great problem of ancient slavery. It is vain to regard it, with Loria,* as a necessary

* *Analisi della proprietà capitalista*, Turin, 1889,

59 B.C. counterpoise to the attraction of Free Land, for in the Roman Empire at this time there was not a square inch of free land.

The key to ancient slavery. Rome was a Slave-State because slavery was essential to her production and development; because she could only obtain workers by the slave-trade and by conquest. Her slavery and her aggression are inextricably intertwined; for prisoners, to-day a mere incubus of warfare, were then a substantial indemnity for the expenses of a campaign. Every increase in the demand for labour in Italy spurred the ambition and the audacity of the Roman generals; and the glamour of the feats of a Lucullus and a Pompey was enhanced by the workers they carried back to the West.

No Corn laws in antiquity. The same essential difference between ancient and modern life can be observed in another field. Whenever a capitalist and industrial *bourgeoisie* enjoys a period of prosperity, the population increases so fast that the surrounding territory is insufficient to supply its needs. This is happening of course, all round us in the Europe of to-day; and it was happening in the same way in the Rome of Cæsar's time. Nowadays such a contingency causes no anxiety; for the need is at once met by the private enterprise of merchants. Means of transport are easy and inexpensive; and there are young and fertile countries where men of the same civilisation and the same needs as ourselves grow far more corn than they consume, and are glad to sell it for our industrial products. These communities are thus in a position to supply us in such abundance that many industrial countries reject a part of what is offered them by putting an import duty on corn. If one of the ancients were to come to life again nothing would be more incomprehensible to him than our modern corn duties. In those days there was hardly a country which had not difficulty in producing the corn necessary for its own maintenance, and even countries like Sicily, Egypt or the Crimea, which ordinarily enjoyed plenteous harvests, preferred if possible to keep their corn for themselves. The result is obvious. Countries where capital was abundant, so far from putting any check on the import of corn, did all they could to promote it, and they were naturally tempted or even compelled to extend their power over corn-growing regions in order to be able to control the export.* Thus, from the moment when Rome became the capital of the world, the question of her food-supply became one of the most pressing in her politics. Here again we have a potent

* See Appendix A.

and never-failing stimulus toward aggression in the civilised societies of the ancient world. 59 B.C.

Modern instruments of production.

Let us draw the argument together. The progress of a mercantile democracy was decided in antiquity, as it is decided to-day, by the progressive increase in demand from generation to generation, and by the number and character of the persons who are able or anxious to live up to a high standard of comfort. We have watched this progress from generation to generation, for a period of one hundred and fifty years, from the generation which was growing up at the end of the Second Punic War to the generation contemporary with Cæsar. We have only to look round to observe the same phenomena in the civilisation of to-day. But the instruments of production at our disposal are so powerful, and the wealth already accumulated so great, that, so long as there is no slackening in the energy of our captains of industry, it is easy to satisfy the increasing demand of new generations by employing part of the wealth already produced, not to satisfy the needs of the present, but to contribute to the production of new wealth for the future. Our industries, in short, will be able to draw out of the ground, as it were, all that is necessary to increase production. They have at their command, not only the precious metals, increasingly employed as exchange becomes more frequent, but also vastly improved means of communication and transport and a growing store of raw material and food-stuffs; precious metals in particular are so abundant and so easily borrowed that any one who undertakes to pay a small interest and promises repayment never fails to secure them.

Scarcity of precious metals in antiquity.

In the ancient world, on the other hand, where production was slower and less abundant, appetites increased far faster than the means of their satisfaction; and mercantile democracies suffered from acute temporary crises owing to their periodical inability to increase production and satisfy consumers. Above all they suffered from the scarcity of precious metals. Between 70 and 60 B.C. for instance, at a time when Italy was investing money throughout the Mediterranean countries and Rome had become the London of the ancient world—the centre to which the sovereigns and cities of all the world repaired for their loans—Italy was driven almost to distraction owing to the failure of the supply of gold and silver. There were constant complaints about the high rate of interest, accompanied by attempts to prevent the export of bullion, and by a serious agitation for the remission of debt. The

59 B.C. demand for money, in fact, grew more rapidly than the supply, so rapidly that it is impossible to say what would have happened if it had not been relieved by the palliative of war, with its expedients of indiscriminate pillage from the treasures of temples, the palaces of kings and the houses of the wealthy, both among civilised and barbarous populations. Thus war performed a peculiar and valuable function in ancient society by quickening the circulation of capital, which was often too sluggish and immovable for the impatient appetites of a young *bourgeoisie*. Since the modern world has discovered other ways of promoting this object, the economic significance of war has now been entirely reversed.

Production through destruction.

Thus we see that poverty, scarcity of population, and the comparative want of productive power in the ancient world made it impossible that a capitalist *bourgeoisie* should be formed without warfare—without struggle that is, not between man and nature, but between man and man. Yet the carnage and destruction which war must always entail tended themselves to impede the growth of population, the progress of industry and the increase of wealth; though the cheapness of ancient armaments made war far less ruinous than to-day. Thus we reach the curious and tragic conclusion that an ancient community could only become wealthy and civilised by preying upon its neighbours. This was a fundamental contradiction in ancient life which Cæsar and his contemporaries in vain attempted to solve.

No Civil Service at Rome.

But there were lesser difficulties than this which they equally failed to meet. If aggression meant to Rome what industry means to modern Germany, France and North America, the Romans needed what would correspond to a complex and powerful system of industry; they required an efficient army and a well-organised government. Yet we find that the army and the government and indeed all the public services, from the lowest to the most essential, were at Rome in a state of indescribable confusion. Owing to the fact that every single magistracy was elective, the government lacked what forms the stable foundation of all modern States, a permanent Civil Service, which, amid the struggles of party, can continue almost mechanically to fulfil the most necessary and elementary functions of national life. At Rome houses would catch fire or tumble to pieces while the Ædiles were busy with the organisation of games. The supply of water was totally insufficient. The first aqueduct had been constructed in 312, a second in

272, a third in 144, a fourth in 125, but since that year the State had neglected the needs of an ever-growing population.* The ships which brought corn for the metropolis were forced to cast anchor in the natural roadstead of Ostia, which was small and insecure and had never been improved,† or else to sail up the Tiber, and discharge their merchandise at the docks or *emporium*, which had been constructed in 192 and 174 under the Aventine, on the site of the Lungo Tevere dei Pierleoni and the Lungo Tevere Testaccio. The streets of Rome were as unsafe as a forest full of brigands; besides the cut-throats ‡ and the pickpockets who infested them, the passer-by went in terror of his life from crowding waggons and tumbling walls, sudden fires and ill-built houses. 59 B.C.

The disorder of the metropolis was equalled by the anarchy of government. Ever since Italian society had begun to display the variety of tastes and occupations with which we are so familiar in modern life, the Senate had degenerated, like our twentieth-century Parliaments, into a fashionable club for aristocrats and dilettanti, financiers and barristers, men of letters and wire-pullers, who entertained a cordial detestation for one another and were as various in rank and origin, in breeding and ideas, in occupation and ambition, as was the heterogeneous society out of which they sprang, agreeing only, if agreement it can be called, in the common object of using politics as the safest remedy against penury. It included large landed proprietors like Domitius Ahenobarbus, financial magnates like Crassus, illustrious generals like the two Luculli and Pompey, men of letters like Cicero, lawyers like Hortensius, scholars like Varro, students of astronomy and agriculture like Nigidius Fibulus and Tramellius Scrofa, and solicitors like Sulpicius Rufus §—each one of them bent firstly upon his own private aims and ambitions, and next upon those of his class or his party, or his clients and dependents. The latter-day Senate.

Thus the Senate, like so many modern Parliaments, lost its predominant position and degenerated into an instrument of which the complex social forces in the outside world attempted from time to time to make use. It was these powerful outside forces which were struggling together for supremacy, and it is with them that the true interest of the history lies. With the exception of the Civil Service and the great manufacturing The Interests at Rome.

* Lanciani, T. R. A., p. 255 f.

† Jordan, T. R. I., (3rd ed.), 429-431.

‡ On the frequency of homicide at Rome see a curious passage in Varro, R. R., i., 69, 3.

§ Willems, i. 556 f.

59 B.C. interests, these forces were very much the same then as they are to-day. There were the financiers, the large landowners, the moderate proprietors, the surviving representatives of the aristocracy, the middle class with its social and pecuniary ambitions, the influences of militarism, and the demagogues. All were unsparing in the effort to use for their own purposes the powers which the Senate had inherited from the days when it was the organ of a single ruling class. But the change had killed the old Senatorial prestige. Except at moments of general excitement, or when some scandal was in the air, it was but thinly attended. It had practically ceased to govern, and had allowed the actual work of administration to sink into a routine of inefficiency or into the unscrupulous grasp of cliques and factions.

The Senate and finance.

The history of the Roman coinage affords a good instance of its weakness. While Italy had become the financial metropolis of the Mediterranean, the Senate continued to coin nothing but silver money, and the innumerable loans arranged at Rome had to be paid out in a foreign currency or in ingots. The only Roman gold coins which were struck were due to the generals, who had the right to mint money to pay their soldiers, and used the privilege to put their own titles and effigies on the coins.* The State finances were thus in a state of chaos not unlike that in Turkey to-day. No further action was taken against the pirates whose activity had, it is true, been somewhat curtailed since the fall of Mithridates and the conquest of Crete and Syria; and there was hardly a district in the Empire which was not infested by brigands.

Militarism and military demoralisation.

What was stranger still in an Empire that rested on force, the army was completely disorganised. Now that the ancient national militia had been transformed into a mercenary soldiery, it was imperative to establish a regular course of military training for recruits. Yet nobody thought of doing so. The legions which were left upon distant frontiers were often reduced to scarcely half their fighting strength† and changed their generals from year to year. It is almost farcical to apply the name of general to politicians who hurried off from the Forum to take command of an army, surrounded by a staff of friends none of whom had the very faintest idea of what they were required to teach their soldiers, beyond what they might happen to have picked up in some Greek military text-book. Moreover they were far more interested in the dis-

* Mommsen, R. M. W., p. 400. † Rüstow, H. K. C., 3.

covery of good investments for their capital than in studying the complex problems of tactics or strategy, and were always in a hurry to return to Italy. Cæsar himself went out to take over the command of four legions with no experience of war beyond the siege of Mitylene and the small punitive expeditions which he had directed in Spain in 61. The only men at all skilled in the profession of arms were the centurions, who were chosen from the common militia. Stranger still was the circumstance that the army now consisted entirely of infantry. In the old days the younger members of rich families formed corps of cavalry, but the youth of the new generation preferred to lend money at 40 per cent. in the provinces or to stay at Rome in the enjoyment of inherited fortunes. Moreover even if they had all been born soldiers, they could not have supplied the Empire with a sufficient force of cavalry. Roman generals were therefore obliged to levy horsemen from among barbarians in Thrace, Gaul, Germany, Spain and Numidia, and were actually reduced to giving orders through interpreters. Surprising indeed are the vagaries of history. Rome achieved her greatest conquests with an utterly disorganised army, which she hurled headlong at the enemy, blindly trusting in its efficiency; and it was these very conquests which completed the military decadence of her people. Ancient militarism, like modern industrialism, sounded the death-knell of the military virtues. 59 B.C.

Senatorial foreign policy.

It would not be easy to discover in the whole course of history a State which effected conquests so extensive with resources so slender and ill-directed as Rome. Her political institutions matched the weakness of her army. The Senate, the constitutional instrument of foreign policy, had no regular means for securing information, and no servants acquainted with the principles and history of the numerous and difficult questions which came up for settlement. Its habitual expedient was to continue deliberation and postpone decision so long as was decently possible, in faithful adherence to a vague tradition of caution dating from the time of Scipio Africanus. Indeed for more than a century Rome had only increased her Empire with evident reluctance and in cases where there was no other possible alternative. Though Lucullus and Pompey had clearly demonstrated that this inherited policy no longer corresponded either with the changed conditions of the outside world or with the changed requirements of Rome herself, she still continually allowed herself, as in the case of Gaul, to be surprised

59 B.C. and stupefied by the march of events. The numerous tributary or allied States were left to themselves; and no one was charged to watch them or to maintain constant relations with their chiefs. The policy pursued towards allied or independent neighbours varied from one year to the next according to the caprice of the governors sent out to the frontier provinces; and it sometimes happened that at a critical moment the most serious questions were simply left to chance.

Comparative efficiency of the Democratic chiefs.

This almost incredible want of organisation in the sphere of foreign policy explains much of the success of the Democratic party. The attempt made by the Conservatives after the conspiracy of Catiline to restore the failing authority of the Senate had been overcome by the coalition of Pompey, Crassus and Cæsar, in the face of an almost incredulous aristocracy. The Consulship of Cæsar seemed to mark the definite conclusion, in favour of the Democratic party, of the battle which had been raging since the year 70. For the government was now no longer administered in the Senate-House, but in the vestibule or bedroom of the palaces of Pompey and Crassus and in the tent or litter of Cæsar, as he moved up and down his Gallic province. Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus together concerted measures for the administration of the Empire at home and abroad, for the distribution of offices and the outlay of public money; and their acts were ratified by meetings packed with the tame voters of Clodius and by the few complacent Senators who kept up, in an almost empty house, the sorry pretence of a deliberative assembly. For their correspondence and accounts, their information and intrigues, they fell back on the aid of the most able and skilful of their multitudinous slaves, who became in this way the irresponsible agents of a lawless and irresponsible Government of Three. Thus in spite of their blunders, the Democrats had triumphed in the long party duel; they won because they were quicker than their rivals to seize the importance of Lucullus' work in the East; because they had seen that aggressive imperialism and a policy of personal initiative corresponded better than the pedantry of the constitutionalists with the needs of the day; because they promised to inspire, and had already succeeded in inspiring, Roman foreign policy with the energy in which it had long been lacking.

The task of the Triumvirs.

But could the huge mechanism of Empire continue to be set in motion by the weak leverage of the Workmen's Associations at Rome and the retainers of three far from unanimous politicians? Were the Three so immensely superior to their fellow

citizens as to divide between them with impunity the heritage of many generations of Empire? We have but to look at their characters for an answer. 59 B.C.

Pompey was, it is true, the typical grand *seigneur*, and gifted with a considerable measure of ability, but against this must be set some peculiar sources of weakness. The satiety of immense riches and the easy and unprecedented successes of his early career acted as a dead weight upon his spirit: and he was further distracted by the strange passion which seized him in middle life for the young and gracious Julia. A great aristocrat, fully persuaded that he was a great man, he was ready enough to be responsible for the government of the world, provided only that it in no way interfered with his personal comfort and satisfaction. Pompey.

Crassus was a man of firmer and less pliable stuff; untiring in his pursuit of power and wealth, he was not to be sated with the mere possession of wealth, with slaves, or houses, or land, or mines, or with the hundreds of debtors whom he held at his mercy; he could never shake off his old dream of a feat of arms which should make him the equal of Lucullus and Pompey and bring compensation for the failures which had lately interrupted his political career. But Crassus after all, except in his family relations, was merely an egoist on a gigantic scale. He was far less concerned for the order or disorder of the Empire as a whole than for the health of his children or for a small mistake in his private accounts. Crassus.

And Cæsar? Cæsar was the psychological puzzle of his day, for his devious course had driven all his critics off the trail. The fashionable young patrician, with his charming literary gift, his exquisite manner in speech and writing, his amazing quickness of acquisition and omnivorous appetite for study, from astronomy at the one pole to strategy at the other, after entering into politics with such a show of moderation, had strangely falsified the expectations of all friends and observers. They had watched him sinking deeper and deeper into debt, then practically selling his services to the highest bidder, changing his whole programme from one day to the next, dragging feminine intrigue into politics and government, exciting the poor and base against the rich and noble, and leaving nothing undone that a cynical and shameless versatility could suggest. How could men forget that the chief of the popular party, who had promised to put an end to the abuses of capitalism, had not scrupled to sell his services for one of Cæsar and his critics.

59 BC. the most discreditable transactions of the time, the reduction of the contract for the taxes of Asia? One who treated politics in this way could surely not be considered a serious statesman by the thinking public of his day. He was merely one of those noisy and unscrupulous but shallow-minded politicians, who, finding an unworthy satisfaction in the futile arts of ostentation and notoriety, and gifted with a magnificent and expressive rhetorical style, often make themselves heard and felt in the disorder of a young mercantile democracy, when men are deaf to the claims of morals or politics, but beginning to be attentive to crude and novel ideas in speech and writing, particularly if expressed in unchastened and vituperative language. There were many no doubt, who put Cæsar in this class. And now this frivolous young upstart was going off to Gaul. And what for? To make wars and conquests! But he had no experience at all of real warfare; and did not every one at Rome know that he had not even good health, that he was of a delicate and nervous constitution, and a prey to attacks of epilepsy?

The real Cæsar.

Contemporary students of politics, who detected in every event the handiwork of some small clique or party, failed to understand that it was circumstances which had continually been thwarting Cæsar, against his own higher aspirations, in all that he had projected to do. The man whom almost all modern historians naively regard as resolved from his earliest youth to undertake, single-handed, the government of the world, and whose life is described as a continuous and calculated effort towards the supreme goal of his ambition, had up to this moment, more than any other distinguished man of his time, been exposed to the merciless buffeting of events. Time after time he had been compelled to act in a manner contrary to his original intentions. With a mind admirably endowed for scientific or artistic achievement, keen, alert, imaginative, and withal ambitious, he was for ever searching, even in the sphere of politics, for the power and beauty which spring from harmony and balance. He had begun life as the champion of a distinguished and moderate Democratic party, drawn from the most cultured circles in Rome, with the ambition of becoming the Pericles of his country; and he served his apprenticeship for the government of a great Empire by studying in the schools of eloquence, fashion and art. But the poverty of his family and the growing apathy of the upper classes had shattered this picturesque illusion. He had been forced to incur debts in order to make a name, and then to sell himself

to Crassus just at the moment when democracy was fast sinking into the slough of mob-rule. Exposed in this way to the irreconcileable resentment and relentless persecution of the nobility, he had sought to shield himself by winning popularity among the poor, and by procuring the money to pay for it. He had thus come to employ the multifarious talents he had inherited from his patrician ancestors as a low-class demagogue, a persistent intriguer and unscrupulous man of business, as daring in his designs as he was remorseless in their execution. At times, in the heat of the conflict, his nervous and excitable temperament had overborne the moderation habitual to his character, and in his attacks on his assailants he had sometimes been carried far further than he had originally intended to go. But he had never allowed any momentary elation to tempt him to his ruin: he had always recovered his bearings before committing any irreparable blunder. The instinct of prudence was too deeply implanted in his nature to be uprooted by the excitements of those years of storm and stress. 59 B.C.

Destiny and human greatness.

And now once more destiny was at his elbow, urging him, the fourth Caius of the Roman democracy, along the road which its first chief had opened into the future, to complete the age-long task begun by Caius Flaminius and continued by Caius Gracchus and Caius Marius. And yet the only object of which he was conscious in going to Gaul was to regain by a few striking victories the respect which he had lost among the upper classes by the unfortunate and inevitable development of his career.* The law of life was the same then as it has been in all ages. The great men of that day were just as ignorant as their fellows of the historic work of which they were at once to be the instruments and the victims. Like all other human beings, they were the plaything of what in history we can name Destiny, though it is nothing more than the unforeseen coincidence of events, the emergence into action of hidden forces which, in a complex and disordered society such as that of Rome or of our own day, no contemporary can be expected to discern. These men had risen to their high position, not through any superhuman powers of will or intellect on their own part, but through the singular conditions of the days in which they lived—because birth and reputation, riches, ambi-

* The intentions attributed to him by Mommsen, R. G., iii. 222, seem to spring entirely out of his fanatical admiration for his hero. They are too profound. The way in which Cæsar conducted his campaigns in Gaul shows that he was always impelled to action by immediate motives.

59 B.C. tion and ability, and above all chance, had placed in their hands a power that grew resistlessly greater as, through the growing apathy of the upper classes, the old State institutions crumbled steadily to decay. But the day was at hand when their coveted greatness would become revealed in a tragic and inextricable embarrassment: when it compelled them to assume labours and responsibilities which as far exceeded their strength as the honours they were now enjoying exceeded their deserts. Dark indeed was the issue which Destiny was reserving for each one of the three. Meanwhile, solitary amidst all the disorder of his time, Lucullus, the strangest and most isolated figure in the whole history of Rome, from his vast and sumptuous gardens on the Pincian, on the height where the Belvedere of the Medici Villa had since been placed, philosophised with the doctors of Greece on the corruption of his countrymen, as he looked quietly down from his calm island refuge over the great city at his feet—a vast and moving ocean for ever swept by the tides and tempests of human society. Alone among all the rivals of his power he was to have a gentle passing: Euthanasia, the Greek goddess of a Happy Death, came herself to fetch him home. Not long was to elapse before his wild and soaring spirit, after enjoying for a brief space the late-found happiness of repose, reached the end of its earthly term, having achieved, in ignorance, like all its fellows, one of the mightiest tasks in history; and while the world-tragedy of the new Imperialism which he had created was drawing slowly to its climax, Lucullus, alone of the great men of his day, fell peacefully asleep in the arms of the silent goddess.

The passing of Lucullus.

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